

# MUSEUM

OF

## Foreign Literature, Science and Art.

APRIL, 1840.

From the Edinburgh Review.

*The Life of Robert Lord Clive; collected from the Family Papers, communicated by the Earl of Powis.* By Major-General Sir John Malcolm, K. C. B. 3 vols. 8vo. London: 1836.

WE have always thought it strange, that while the history of the Spanish empire in America is familiarly known to all the nations of Europe, the great actions of our countrymen in the East should, even among ourselves, excite little interest. Every schoolboy knows who imprisoned Montezuma, and who strangled Atabalipa. But we doubt whether one in ten, even among English gentlemen of highly cultivated minds, can tell who won the battle of Buxar, who perpetrated the massacre of Patna, whether Surajah Dowlah ruled in Oude or in Travancore, or whether Holkar was a Hindoo or a Mussulman. Yet the victories of Cortes were gained over savages who had no letters, who were ignorant of the use of metals, who had not broken in a single animal to labour, who wielded no better weapons than those which could be made out of sticks, flints, and fish-bones, who regarded a horse-soldier as a monster half man and half beast, who took a harquebusier for a sorcerer, able to scatter the thunder and lightning of the skies. The people of India, when we subdued them, were ten times as numerous as the vanquished Americans, and were at the same time quite as highly civilized as the victorious Spaniards. They had reared cities larger and fairer than Saragossa or Toledo, and buildings more beautiful and costly than the cathedral of Seville. They could show bankers richer than the richest firms of Barcelona or Cadiz, viceroys whose splendour far surpassed that of Ferdinand the Catholic, myriads of cavalry and long trains of artillery which would have astonished the Great Captain. It might have been expected, that every Englishman who takes any interest in any part of history would be curious to know how a handful of his countrymen, separated from their home by an immense ocean, subjugated, in the course of a few years, one of the greatest empires in the world.

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Yet, unless we greatly err, this subject is, to most readers, not only insipid, but positively distasteful.

Perhaps the fault lies partly with the historians. Mr. Mill's book, though it has undoubtedly great and rare merit, is not sufficiently animated and picturesque to attract those who read for amusement. Orme, inferior to no English historian in style and power of painting, is minute even to tediousness. In one volume he allots, on an average, a closely-printed quarto page to the events of every forty-eight hours. The consequence is, that his narrative, though one of the most authentic, and one of the most finely written in our language, has never been very popular, and is now scarcely ever read.

We fear that Sir John Malcolm's volumes will not much attract those readers whom Orme and Mill have repelled. The materials placed at his disposal by the late Lord Powis, were indeed of great value. But we cannot say that they have been very skilfully worked up. It would, however, be unjust to criticise with severity a work which, if the author had lived to complete and revise it, would probably have been improved by condensation, and by a better arrangement. We are more disposed to perform the pleasing duty of expressing our gratitude to the noble family to which the public owes so much useful and curious information.

The effect of the book, even when we make the largest allowance for the partiality of those who have furnished, and of those who have digested the materials, is, on the whole, greatly to raise the character of Lord Clive. We are far indeed from sympathising with Sir John Malcolm, whose love passes the love of biographers, and who can see nothing but wisdom and justice in the actions of his idol. But we are at least equally far from concurring in the severe judgment of Mr. Mill, who seems to us to show less discrimination in his account of Clive, than in any other part of his valuable work. Clive, like most men who are born with strong passions, and tried by strong temptations, committed great faults. But every person who takes a fair and enlightened view of his whole career must admit, that our island, so fertile in heroes and statesmen, has scarcely ever

produced a man more truly great either in arms or in council.

The Clives had been settled, ever since the twelfth century, on an estate of no great value, near Market-Drayton, in Shropshire. In the reign of George the First, this moderate but ancient inheritance was possessed by Mr. Richard Clive, who seems to have been a plain man of no great tact or capacity. He had been bred to the law, and divided his time between professional business and the avocations of a small proprietor. He married a lady from Manchester, of the name of Gaskill, and became the father of a very numerous family. His eldest son, Robert, the founder of the British empire in India, was born at the old seat of his ancestors on the 29th of September, 1725.

Some lineaments of the character of the man were early discerned in the child. There remain letters written by his relations when he was in his seventh year; and from these it appears that, even at that early age, his strong will, and his fiery passions, sustained by a constitutional intrepidity which sometimes seemed hardly compatible with soundness of mind, had begun to cause great uneasiness to the family. "Fighting," says one of his uncles, "to which he is out of measure addicted, gives his temper such a fierceness and imperiousness, that he flies out on every trifling occasion." The old people of the neighbourhood still remember to have heard from their parents how Bob Clive climbed to the top of the lofty steeple of Market-Drayton, and with what terror the inhabitants saw him seated on a stone spout near the summit. They also relate how he formed all the good-for-nothing lads of the town into a kind of predatory army, and compelled the shopkeepers to submit to a tribute of apples and half-pence, in consideration of which he guaranteed the security of their windows. He was sent from school to school, making very little progress in his learning, and gaining for himself every where the character of an exceedingly naughty boy. One of his masters, it is said, was sagacious enough to prophesy that the idle lad would make a great figure in the world. But the general opinion seems to have been, that poor Robert was a dunce, if not a reprobate. His family expected nothing good from such slender parts and such a headstrong temper. It is not strange, therefore, that they gladly accepted for him, when he was in his eighteenth year, a writership in the service of the East India Company, and shipped him off to make a fortune or to die of a fever at Madras.

Far different were the prospects of Clive from those of the youths whom the East India College now annually sends to the presidencies of our Asiatic empire. The company was then purely a trading corporation. Its territory consisted of a few square miles, for which rent was paid to the native governments. Its troops were scarcely numerous enough to man the batteries of three or four ill-constructed forts, which had been erected for the protection of the warehouses. The natives who composed a considerable part of these little garrisons, had not yet been trained in the discipline of Europe, and were armed some with swords and shields, some with bows and arrows. The business of the servant of the company was not, as now, to conduct the judicial, financial, and diplomatic business of a great country, but to take stock, to make advances to weavers, to ship cargoes,

and to keep a sharp look out for private traders who dared to infringe the monopoly. The younger clerks were so miserably paid, that they could scarcely subsist without incurring debt; the elder enriched themselves by trading on their own account; and those who lived to rise to the top of the service, often accumulated considerable fortunes.

Madras, to which Clive had been appointed, was, at this time, perhaps the first in importance of the company's settlements. In the preceding century, Fort St. George had arisen on a barren spot, beaten by a raging surf; and in the neighbourhood a town, inhabited by many thousands of natives, had sprung up, as towns spring up in the East, with the rapidity of the prophet's gourd. There were already in the suburbs many white villas, each surrounded by its garden, whither the wealthy agents of the company retired, after the labours of the desk and the warehouse, to enjoy the cool breeze which springs up at sunset from the Bay of Bengal. The habits of these mercantile grandees appear to have been more profuse, luxurious, and ostentatious, than those of the high judicial and political functionaries who have succeeded them. But comfort was far less understood. Many devices which now mitigate the heat of the climate, preserve health, and prolong life, were unknown. There was less intercourse with Europe than at present. The voyage by the Cape, which in our time has often been performed within three months, was then very seldom accomplished in six, and was sometimes protracted to more than a year. Consequently the Anglo-Indian was then much more estranged from his country, much more an oriental in his tastes and habits, and much less fitted to mix in society after his return to Europe, than the Anglo-Indian of the present day.

Within the fort and its precincts, the English governors exercised, by permission of the native rulers, an extensive authority. But they had never dreamed of claiming independent power. The surrounding country was governed by the nabob of the Carnatic, a deputy of the viceroy of the Deccan, commonly called the Nizam, who was himself only a deputy of the mighty prince designated by our ancestors as the Great Mogul. Those names, once so august and formidable, still remain. There is still a nabob of the Carnatic, who lives on a pension allowed to him by the company, out of the revenues of the province which his ancestors ruled. There is still a Nizam, whose capital is overawed by a British cantonment, and to whom a British resident gives, under the name of advice, commands which are not to be disputed. There is still a Mogul, who is permitted to play at holding courts and receiving petitions, but who has less power to help or hurt than the youngest civil servant of the company.

Clive's voyage was unusually tedious even for that age. The ship remained some months at the Brazils, where the young adventurer picked up some knowledge of Portuguese, and spent all his pocket-money. He did not arrive in India till more than a year after he had left England. His situation at Madras was most painful. His funds were exhausted. His pay was small. He had contracted debts. He was wretchedly lodged—no small calamity in a climate which can be rendered tolerable to an European only by spacious and well-placed apartments. He had been furnished with letters of recommendation



to a gentleman who might have assisted him; but when he landed at Fort St. George, he found that this gentleman had sailed for England. His shy and haughty disposition withheld him from introducing himself. He was several months in India before he became acquainted with a single family. The climate affected his health and spirits. His duties were of a kind ill suited to his ardent and daring character. He pined for his home, and in his letters to his relations expressed his feelings in language softer and more pensive than we should have expected, from the waywardness of his boyhood, or from the inflexible sternness of his later years. "I have not enjoyed," says he, "one happy day since I left my native country." And again, "I must confess, at intervals, when I think of my dear native England, it affects me in a very particular manner. . . . If I should be so far blest as to revisit again my own country, but more especially Manchester, the centre of all my wishes, all that I could hope or desire for would be presented before me in one view."

One solace he found of the most respectable kind. The governor possessed a good library, and permitted Clive to have access to it. The young man devoted much of his leisure to reading, and acquired at this time almost all the knowledge of books that he ever possessed. As a boy he had been too idle, as a man he soon became too busy, for literary pursuits.

But neither climate, nor poverty, nor study, nor the sorrows of a homesick exile, could tame the desperate audacity of his spirit. He behaved to his official superiors as he had behaved to his schoolmasters, and was several times in danger of losing his situation. Twice, while residing in the Writers' Buildings, he attempted to destroy himself; and twice the pistol which he snapped at his own head failed to go off. This circumstance, it is said, affected him as a similar escape affected Wallenstein. After satisfying himself that the pistol was really well loaded, he burst forth into an exclamation, that surely he was reserved for something great.

About this time an event, which at first seemed likely to destroy all his hopes in life, suddenly opened before him a new path to eminence. Europe had been, during some years, distracted by the war of the Austrian succession. George II. was the steady ally of Maria Theresa. The house of Bourbon took the opposite side. Though England was even then the first of maritime powers, she was not, as she has since become, more than a match on the sea for all the nations of the world together; and she found it difficult to maintain a contest against the united navies of France and Spain. In the eastern seas France obtained the ascendancy. Labourdonnais, governor of Mauritius, a man of eminent talents and virtues, conducted an expedition to the continent of India, in spite of the opposition of the British fleet—landed, assembled an army, appeared before Madras, and compelled the town and fort to capitulate. The keys were delivered up; the French colours were displayed on Fort St. George; and the contents of the company's warehouses were seized as prize of war by the conquerors. It was stipulated by the capitulation that the English inhabitants should be prisoners of war on parole, and that the town should remain in the hands of the French till it should be ransomed. Labourdonnais pledged his

honour that only a moderate ransom should be required.

But the success of Labourdonnais had awakened the jealousy of his countryman, Dupleix, governor of Pondicherry. Dupleix, moreover, had already begun to revolve gigantic schemes, with which the restoration of Madras to the English was by no means compatible. He declared that Labourdonnais had gone beyond his powers; that conquests made by the French arms on the continent of India were at the disposal of the governor of Pondicherry alone; and that Madras should be rased to the ground. Labourdonnais was compelled to yield. The anger which the breach of the capitulation excited among the English, was increased by the ungenerous manner in which Dupleix treated the principal servants of the company. The governor and several of the first gentlemen of Fort St. George, were carried under a guard to Pondicherry, and conducted through the town in a triumphal procession under the eyes of fifty thousand spectators. It was with reason thought that this gross violation of public faith absolved the inhabitants of Madras from the engagements into which they had entered with Labourdonnais. Clive fled from the town by night in the disguise of a Mussulman, and took refuge at Fort St. David, one of the small English settlements subordinate to Madras.

The circumstances in which he was now placed, naturally led him to adopt a profession better suited to his restless and intrepid spirit, than the business of examining packages and casting accounts. He solicited and obtained an ensign's commission in the service of the company, and at twenty-one entered on his military career. His personal courage, of which he had, while still a writer, given signal proof by a desperate duel with a military bully who was the terror of Fort St. David, speedily made him conspicuous even among hundreds of brave men. He soon began to show in his new calling other qualities which had not before been discerned in him—judgment, sagacity, deference to legitimate authority. He distinguished himself highly in several operations against the French, and was particularly noticed by Major Lawrence, who was then considered as the ablest British officer in India.

He had been only a few months in the army when intelligence arrived that peace had been concluded between Great Britain and France. Dupleix was in consequence compelled to restore Madras to the English company; and the young ensign was at liberty to resume his former business. He did indeed return for a short time to his desk. He again quitted it in order to assist Major Lawrence in some petty hostilities with the natives, and then again returned to it. While he was thus wavering between a military and a commercial life, events took place which decided his choice. The politics of India assumed a new aspect. There was peace between the English and French crowns; but there arose between the English and French companies trading to the east, a war most eventful and important—a war in which the prize was nothing less than the magnificent inheritance of the house of Tamerlane.

The empire which Baber and his Moguls reared in the sixteenth century, was long one of the most extensive and splendid in the world. In no Euro-

pean kingdom was so large a population subject to a single prince, or so large a revenue poured into the treasury. The beauty and magnificence of the buildings erected by the sovereigns of Hindostan, amazed even travellers who had seen St. Peter's. The innumerable retinues and gorgeous decorations which surrounded the throne of Delhi, dazzled even eyes which were accustomed to the pomp of Versailles. Some of the great viceroys, who held their posts by virtue of commissions from the Mogul, ruled as many subjects and enjoyed as large an income as the King of France or the Emperor of Germany. Even the deputies of these deputies might well rank, as to extent of territory and amount of revenue, with the Grand Duke of Tuscany, or the Elector of Saxony.

There can be little doubt that this great empire, powerful and prosperous as it appears on a superficial view, was yet, even in its best days, far worse governed than the worst governed parts of Europe now are. The administration was tainted with all the vices of oriental despotism, and with all the vices inseparable from the domination of race over race. The conflicting pretensions of the princes of the royal house, produced a long series of crimes and public disasters. Ambitious lieutenants of the sovereign sometimes aspired to independence. Fierce tribes of Hindoos, impatient of a foreign yoke, frequently withheld tribute, repelled the armies of the government from their mountain fastnesses, and poured down in arms on the cultivated plains. In spite, however, of much constant maladministration, in spite of occasional convulsions which shook the whole frame of society, this great monarchy, on the whole, retained, during some generations, an outward appearance of unity, majesty, and energy. But, throughout the long reign of Aurungzebe, the state, notwithstanding all that the vigor and policy of the prince could effect, was hastening to dissolution. After his death, which took place in the year 1707, the ruin was fearfully rapid. Violent shocks from without co-operated with an incurable decay which was fast proceeding within; and in a few years the empire had undergone utter decomposition.

The history of the successors of Theodosius bears no small analogy to that of the successors of Aurungzebe. But perhaps the fall of the Carolingians furnishes the nearest parallel to the fall of the Moguls. Charlemagne was scarcely interred when the imbecility and the disputes of his descendants began to bring contempt on themselves and destruction on their subjects. The wide dominion of the Franks was severed into a thousand pieces. Nothing more than a nominal dignity was left to the abject heirs of an illustrious name, Charles the Bald, and Charles the Fat, and Charles the Simple. Fierce invaders, differing from each other in race, language, and religion, flocked as if by concert from the furthest corners of the earth, to plunder provinces which the government could no longer defend. The pirates of the Baltic extended their ravages from the Elbe to the Pyrenees, and at length fixed their seat in the rich valley of the Seine. The Hungarian, in whom the trembling monks fancied that they recognised the Gog and Magog of prophecy, carried back the plunder of the cities of Lombardy to the depth of the Pannonian forests. The Saracen ruled in Sicily, desolated the fertile plains of Campania, and spread

terror even to the walls of Rome. In the midst of these sufferings, a great internal change passed upon the empire. The corruption of death began to ferment into new forms of life. While the great body, as a whole, was torpid and passive, every separate member began to feel with a sense, and to move with an energy all its own. Just here, in the most barren and dreary tract of European history, all feudal privileges, all modern nobility, take their source. To this point we trace the power of those princes who, nominally vassals, but really independent, long governed, with the titles of dukes, marquesses, and counts, almost every part of the dominions which had obeyed Charlemagne.

Such or nearly such was the change which passed on the Mogul empire during the forty years which followed the death of Aurungzebe. A series of nominal sovereigns, sunk in indolence and debauchery, sauntered away life in secluded palaces, chewing bang, fondling concubines, and listening to buffoons. A series of ferocious invaders had descended through the western passes, to prey on the defenceless wealth of Hindostan. A Persian conqueror crossed the Indus, marched through the gates of Delhi, and bore away in triumph those treasures of which the magnificence had astounded Roe and Bernier;—the Peacock Throne, on which the richest jewels of Golconda had been disposed by the most skilful hands of Europe, and the inestimable Mountain of Light, which, after many strange vicissitudes, lately shone in the bracelet of Runjeet Sing, and is now destined to adorn the hideous idol of Orissa. The Afghan soon followed to complete the work of devastation which the Persian had begun. The warlike tribes of Rajpoots threw off the Mussulman yoke. A band of mercenary soldiers occupied Rohilcund. The Seiks ruled on the Indus. The Jauts spread terror along the Jumna. The high lands which border on the western sea-coast of India poured forth a yet more formidable race;—a race which was long the terror of every native power, and which yielded only, after many desperate and doubtful struggles, to the fortune and genius of England. It was under the reign of Aurungzebe that this wild clan of plunderers first descended from the mountains; and soon after his death, every corner of his wide empire learned to tremble at the mighty name of the Mahrattas. Many fertile vice-royalties were entirely subdued by them. Their dominions stretched across the peninsula from sea to sea. Their captains reigned at Poonah, at Gualior, in Guzerat, in Berar, and in Tanjore. Nor did they, though they had become great sovereigns, therefore cease to be freebooters. They still retained the predatory habits of their forefathers. Every region which was not subject to their rule was wasted by their incursions. Wherever their kettle-drums were heard, the peasant threw his bag of rice on his shoulder, hid his small savings in his girdle, and fled with his wife and children to the mountains or the jungles—to the milder neighborhood of the hyena and the tiger. Many provinces redeemed their harvests by the payment of an annual ransom. Even the wretched phantom who still bore the imperial title, stooped to pay this ignominious "black mail." The camp-fires of one rapacious leader were seen from the walls of the palace of Delhi. Another, at the head of his innumerable cavalry, descended

year after year on the rice-fields of Bengal. Even the European factors trembled for their magazines. Less than a hundred years ago, it was thought necessary to fortify Calcutta against the horsemen of Berar; and the name of the Mahratta ditch still preserves the memory of the danger.

Wherever the viceroys of the Mogul retained authority they became sovereigns. They might still acknowledge in words the superiority of the house of Tamerlane; as a Count of Flanders or a Duke of Burgundy would have acknowledged the superiority of the most helpless driveller among the later Carolingians. They might occasionally send to their titular sovereign a complimentary present, or solicit from him a title of honor. But they were in truth no longer lieutenants removable at pleasure, but independent hereditary princes. In this way originated those great Mussulman houses which formerly ruled Bengal and the Carnatic, and those which still, though in a state of vassalage, exercise some of the powers of royalty at Lucknow and Hyderabad.

In what was this confusion to end? Was the strife to continue during centuries? Was it to terminate in the rise of another great monarchy? Was the Mussulman or the Mahratta to be the Lord of India? Was another Baber to descend from the mountains, and lead the hardy tribes of Cabul and Chorasán against a wealthier and less warlike race? None of these events seemed improbable. But scarcely any man, however sagacious, would have thought it possible, that a trading company, separated from India by fifteen thousand miles of sea, and possessing in India only a few acres for purposes of commerce, would, in less than a hundred years, spread its empire from Cape Comorin to the eternal snow of the Himalayas—would compel Mahratta and Mahomedan to forget their mutual feuds in common subjection—would tame down even those wild races which had resisted the most powerful of the Moguls;—and, having established a government far stronger than any ever known in those countries, would carry its victorious arms far to the east of the Burrampooter, and far to the west of the Hydaspes—dictate terms of peace at the gates of Ava, and seat its vassal on the throne of Candahar.

The man who first saw that it was possible to found an European empire on the ruins of the Mogul monarchy, was Dupleix. His restless, capacious, and inventive mind had formed this scheme, at a time when the ablest servants of the English company were busied only about invoices and bills of lading. Nor had he only proposed to himself the end. He had also a just and distinct view of the means by which it was to be attained. He clearly saw that the greatest force which the princes of India could bring into the field would be no match for a small body of men trained in the discipline, and guided by the tactics, of the west. He saw also that the natives of India might, under European commanders, be formed into armies, such as Saxe or Frederick would be proud to command. He was perfectly aware that the most easy and convenient way in which an European adventurer could exercise sovereignty in India, was to govern the motions, and to speak through the mouth, of some glittering puppet dignified with the title of Nabob or Nizam.

The arts both of war and policy, which a few years later were successfully employed by the English, were first understood and practised by this ingenious and aspiring Frenchman.

The state of India was such that scarcely any aggression could be without a decent pretext, either in old laws or in recent practice. All rights were in a state of utter uncertainty; and the Europeans who took part in the disputes of the natives confounded the confusion, by applying to Asiatic politics the public law of the west, and analogies drawn from the feudal system. If it was convenient to treat a nabob as an independent prince, there was an excellent plea for doing so. He was independent in fact. If it was convenient to treat him as a mere deputy of the court of Delhi, there was no difficulty; for he was so in theory. If it was convenient to consider his office as an hereditary dignity, or as a dignity held during life only, or as a dignity held only during the good pleasure of the Mogul, arguments and precedents might be found for every one of those views. The party who had the heir of Baber in their hands, represented him as the undoubted, the legitimate, the absolute sovereign, whom all subordinate authorities were bound to obey. The party against whom his name was used, did not want plausible pretexts for maintaining that the empire was *de facto* dissolved; and that, though it might be proper to treat the Mogul with respect, as a venerable relique of an order of things which had passed away, it was absurd to regard him as the real master of Hindostan.

In the year 1748, died one of the most powerful of the new masters of India—the great Nizam al Mulk, viceroy of the Deccan. His authority descended to his son Nazir Jung. Of the provinces subject to this high functionary, the Carnatic was the wealthiest and the most extensive. It was governed by an ancient nabob, whose name the English corrupted into Anaverdy Khan.

But there were pretenders to the government both of the viceroyalty and of the subordinate province. Mirzapha Jung, a grandson of Nizam al Mulk, appeared as the competitor of Nazir Jung. Chunda Sahib, son-in-law of a former nabob of the Carnatic, disputed the title of Anaverdy Khan. In the unsettled state of Indian law, it was easy for both Mirzapha Jung and Chunda Sahib to make out something like a claim of right. In a society altogether disorganized, they had no difficulty in finding greedy adventurers to follow their standards. They united their interests, invaded the Carnatic, and applied for assistance to the French, whose fame had been raised by their success against the English in the recent war on the coast of Coromandel.

Nothing could have happened more pleasing to the subtle and ambitious Dupleix. To make a nabob of the Carnatic—to make a viceroy of the Deccan, to rule under their names the whole of southern India;—this was indeed an attractive prospect. He allied himself with the pretenders, and sent four hundred French soldiers, and two thousand sepoys, disciplined after the European fashion, to the assistance of his confederates. A battle was fought. The French distinguished themselves greatly. Anaverdy Khan was defeated and slain. His son, Mahommed Ali, who was afterwards well known in England as the Nabob of Arcot, and who owes to

the eloquence of Burke a most unenviable immortality, fled with a scanty remnant of his army to Trichinopoly; and the conquerors became at once masters of almost every part of the Carnatic.

This was but the beginning of the greatness of Dupleix. After some months of fighting, negotiation, and intrigue, his ability and good fortune seemed to have prevailed every where. Nazir Jung perished by the hands of his own followers; Mirzapha Jung was master of the Deccan; and the triumph of French arms and French policy was complete. At Pondicherry all was exultation and festivity. Salutes were fired from the batteries, and *Te Deum* sung in the churches. The new Nizam came thither to visit his allies; and the ceremony of his installation was performed there with great pomp. Dupleix, dressed in the garb worn by Mahomedans of the highest rank, entered the town in the same palanquin with the Nizam, and in the pageant which followed, took precedence of all the court. He was declared governor of India, from the river Krishna to Cape Comorin, with authority superior even to that of Chunda Sahib. He was entrusted with the command of seven thousand cavalry. It was announced that no mint would be suffered to exist in the Carnatic except that at Pondicherry. A large portion of the treasures which former viceroys of the Deccan had accumulated, found its way into the coffers of the French governor. It was rumoured that he had received three hundred thousand pounds sterling in money, besides many valuable jewels. In fact, there could scarcely be any limit to his gains. He now ruled thirty millions of people with almost absolute power. No honour or emolument could be obtained from the government but by his intervention. No petition, unless signed by him, was even perused by the Nizam.

Mirzapha Jung survived his elevation only a few months. But another prince of the same house was raised to the throne by French influence, and ratified all the promises of his predecessor. Dupleix was now the greatest potentate in India. His countrymen boasted that his name was mentioned with awe even in the chambers of the palace of Delhi. The native population looked with amazement on the progress which, in the short space of four years, an European adventurer had made towards dominion in Asia. Nor was the vainglorious Frenchman content with the reality of power. He loved to display it with arrogant ostentation before the eyes of his subjects and his rivals. Near the spot where his policy had obtained its greatest triumph, by the fall of Nazir Jung and the elevation of Mirzapha, he determined to erect a column, on the four sides of which four pompous inscriptions, in four languages, should proclaim his victory to all the nations of the East. Medals stamped with emblems of his success were buried beneath the foundations of this stately pillar, and around it arose a town bearing the haughty name of Dupleix Fatihabad; which is, being interpreted, the City of the Victory of Dupleix.

The English had made some feeble and irresolute attempts to stop the rapid and brilliant career of the rival company, and continued to recognise Mahomed Ali as nabob of the Carnatic. But the dominions of Mahomed Ali consisted of Trichinopoly alone; and Trichinopoly was now invested by Chun-

da Sahib and his French auxiliaries. To raise the siege seemed impossible. The small force which was then at Madras had no commander. Major Lawrence had returned to England; and not a single officer of established character remained in the settlement. The natives had learned to look with contempt on the mighty nation which was soon to conquer and to rule them. They had seen the French colours flying on Fort St. George; they had seen the chiefs of the English factory led in triumph through the streets of Pondicherry; they had seen the arms and counsels of Dupleix every where successful, while the opposition which the authorities of Madras had made to his progress, had served only to expose their own weakness, and to heighten his glory. At this moment, the valour and genius of an obscure English youth suddenly turned the tide of fortune.

Clive was now twenty-five years old. After hesitating for some time between a military and a commercial life, he had at length been placed in a post which partook of both characters—that of commissary to the troops, with the rank of captain. The present emergency called forth all his powers. He represented to his superiors, that unless some vigorous effort were made, Trichinopoly would fall, the house of Anaverdy Khan would perish, and the French would become the real masters of the whole peninsula of India. It was absolutely necessary to strike some daring blow. If an attack were made on Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic, and the favourite residence of the nabobs, it was not impossible that the siege of Trichinopoly would be raised. The heads of the English settlement, now thoroughly alarmed by the success of Dupleix, and apprehensive that, in the event of a new war between France and Great Britain, Madras would be instantly taken and destroyed, approved of Clive's plan, and entrusted the execution of it to himself. The young captain was put at the head of two hundred English soldiers, and three hundred sepoys, armed and disciplined after the European fashion. Of the eight officers who commanded this little force under him, not a single one had ever been in action, and four of the eight were factors of the company, whom Clive's example had induced to offer their services. The weather was stormy; but Clive pushed on, through thunder, lightning, and rain, to the gates of Arcot. The garrison, in a panic, evacuated the fort, and the English entered it without a blow.

But Clive well knew that he would not be suffered to retain undisturbed possession of his conquest. He instantly began to collect provisions, to throw up works, and to make preparations for sustaining a siege. The garrison, which had fled at his approach, had now recovered from its dismay; and, having been swollen by large reinforcements from the neighbourhood to a force of three thousand men, encamped close to the town. At dead of night, Clive marched out of the fort, attacked the camp by surprise, slew great numbers, dispersed the rest, and returned to his quarters without having lost a single man.

The intelligence of these events was soon carried to Chunda Sahib, who, with his French allies, was besieging Trichinopoly. He immediately detached four thousand men from his camp, and sent them to Arcot. They were speedily joined by the remains of the force which Clive had lately scattered. They



were further strengthened by two thousand men from Vellere; and by a still more important reinforcement of a hundred and fifty French soldiers, whom Dupleix despatched from Pondicherry. The whole of this army, amounting to about ten thousand men, was under the command of Rajah Sahib, son of Chunda Sahib.

Rajah Sahib proceeded to invest the fort of Arcot, which seemed quite incapable of sustaining a siege. The walls were ruinous, the ditches dry, the ramparts too narrow to admit the guns, the battlements too low to protect the soldiers. The little garrison had been greatly reduced by casualties. It now consisted of a hundred and twenty Europeans, and two hundred sepoys. Only four officers were left; the stock of provisions was scanty; and the commander, who had to conduct the defence under circumstances so discouraging, was a young man of five-and-twenty, who had been bred a book-keeper.

During fifty days the siege went on. During fifty days the young captain maintained the defence, with a firmness, vigilance, and ability, which would have done honour to the oldest marshal in Europe. The breach, however, increased day by day. The garrison began to feel the pressure of hunger. Under such circumstances, any troops so scantily provided with officers might have been expected to show signs of insubordination; and the danger was peculiarly great in a force composed of men differing widely from each other in extraction, colour, language, manners, and religion. But the devotion of the little band to its chief surpassed any thing that is related of the tenth legion of Cæsar, or of the old guard of Napoleon. The sepoys came to Clive—not to complain of their scanty fare, but to propose that all the grain should be given to the Europeans, who required more nourishment than the natives of Asia. The thin gruel, they said, which was strained away from the rice, would suffice for themselves. History contains no more touching instances of military fidelity, or of the influence of a commanding mind.

An attempt made by the government of Madras to relieve the place had failed. But there was hope from another quarter. A body of six thousand Mahrattas, half soldiers half robbers, under the command of a chief named Morari Row, had been hired to assist Mahommed Ali; but thinking the French power irresistible, and the triumph of Chunda Sahib certain, they had hitherto remained inactive on the frontiers of the Carnatic. The fame of the defence of Arcot roused them from their torpor. Morari Row declared that he had never before believed that Englishmen could fight, but that he would willingly help them since he saw that they had spirit to help themselves. Rajah Sahib learned that the Mahrattas were in motion. It was necessary for him to be expeditious. He first tried negotiation. He offered large bribes to Clive, which were rejected with scorn. He vowed that, if his proposals were not accepted, he would instantly storm the fort, and put every man in it to the sword. Clive told him, in reply, with characteristic haughtiness, that his father was an usurper, that his army was a rabble, and that he would do well to think twice before he sent such poltroons into a breach defended by English soldiers.

Rajah Sahib determined to storm the fort. The day was well suited to a bold military enterprise.

It was the great Mahommedan festival, which is sacred to the memory of Hosein the son of Ali. The history of Islam contains nothing more touching than that mournful legend:—how the chief of the Fatimites, when all his brave followers had perished round him, drank his latest draught of water and uttered his latest prayer—how the assassins carried his head in triumph—how the tyrant smote the lifeless lips with his staff—and how a few old men recollected with tears that they had seen those lips pressed to the lips of the prophet of God. After the lapse of nearly twelve centuries, the recurrence of this solemn season excites the fiercest and saddest emotions in the bosoms of the devout Moslems of India. They work themselves up to such agonies of rage and lamentation, that some, it is said, have given up the ghost from the mere effect of mental excitement. They believe that whoever, during this festival, falls in arms against the infidels, atones by his death for all the sins of his life, and passes at once to the garden of the Houris. It was at this time that Rajah Sahib determined to assault Arcot. Stimulating drugs were employed to aid the effect of religious zeal, and the besiegers, drunk with enthusiasm, drunk with bang, rushed furiously to the attack.

Clive had received secret intelligence of the design, had made his arrangements, and, exhausted by fatigue, had thrown himself on his bed. He was awakened by the alarm, and was instantly at his post. The enemy advanced, driving before them elephants whose foreheads were armed with iron plates. It was expected that the gates would yield to the shock of these living battering-rams. But the huge beasts no sooner felt the English musket-balls than they turned round, and rushed furiously away, trampling on the multitude that had urged them forward. A raft was launched on the water which filled one part of the ditch. Clive, perceiving that his gunners at that post did not understand their business, took the management of a piece of artillery himself, and cleared the raft in a few minutes. Where the moat was dry, the assailants mounted with great boldness; but they were received with a fire so heavy and so well-directed, that it soon quelled the courage even of fanaticism and of intoxication. The rear ranks of the English kept the front ranks supplied with a constant succession of loaded muskets, and every shot told on the living mass below. After three desperate onsets, the besiegers retired behind the ditch.

The struggle lasted about an hour. Four hundred of the assailants fell. The garrison lost only five or six men. The besieged passed an anxious night, looking for a renewal of the attack. But when day broke, the enemy were no more to be seen. They had retired, leaving to the English several guns and a large quantity of ammunition.

The news was received at Fort St. George with transports of joy and pride. Clive was justly regarded as a man equal to any command. Two hundred English soldiers, and seven hundred sepoys, were sent to him, and with this force he instantly commenced offensive operations. He took the fort of Timery, effected a junction with a division of Morari Row's army, and hastened, by forced marches, to attack Rajah Sahib, who was at the head of about five thousand men, of whom three hundred were French. The action was sharp; but Clive gained a

complete victory. The military chest of Rajah Sahib fell into the hands of the conquerors. Six hundred sepoy, who had served in the enemy's army, came over to Clive's quarters, and were taken into the British service. Conjeeveram surrendered without a blow. The governor of Arnee deserted Chunda Sahib, and recognised the title of Mahommed Ali.

Had the entire direction of the war been entrusted to Clive, it would probably have been brought to a speedy close. But the timidity and incapacity which appeared in all the movements of the English, except where he was personally present, protracted the struggle. The Mahrattas muttered that his soldiers were of a different race from the British whom they found elsewhere. The effect of this languor was, that in no long time Rajah Sahib, at the head of a considerable army, in which were four hundred French troops, appeared almost under the guns of Fort St. George, and laid waste the villas and gardens of the gentlemen of the English settlement. But he was again encountered and defeated by Clive. More than a hundred of the French were killed or taken—a loss more serious than that of thousands of natives. The victorious army marched from the field of battle to Fort St. David. On the road lay the City of the Victory of Dupleix, and the stately monument which was designed to commemorate the triumphs of France in the East. Clive ordered both the city and the monument to be rased to the ground. He was induced, we believe, to take this step, not by personal or national malevolence, but by a just and profound policy. The town and its pompous name, the pillar and its vaunting inscriptions, were among the devices by which Dupleix had laid the public mind of India under a spell. This spell it was Clive's business to break. The natives had been taught that France was confessedly the first power in Europe, and that the English did not presume to dispute her supremacy. No measure could be more effectual for the removing of this delusion than the public and solemn demolition of the French trophies.

The government of Madras, encouraged by these events, determined to send a strong detachment, under Clive, to reinforce the garrison of Trichinopoly. But just at this conjuncture, Major Lawrence arrived from England, and assumed the chief command. From the waywardness and impatience of control which had characterised Clive, both at school and in the counting-house, it might have been expected that he would not, after such achievements, act with zeal and good humour in a subordinate capacity. But Lawrence had early treated him with kindness; and it is bare justice to Clive to say, that, proud and overbearing as he was, kindness was never thrown away upon him. He cheerfully placed himself under the orders of his old friend, and exerted himself as strenuously in the second post as he could have done in the first. Lawrence well knew the value of such assistance. Though himself gifted with no intellectual faculty higher than plain good sense, he fully appreciated the powers of his brilliant coadjutor. Though he had made a methodical study of military tactics, and, like all men regularly bred to a profession, was disposed to look with disdain on interlopers, he had yet liberality enough to acknowledge that Clive was an exception to common rules. "Some people," he wrote, "are

pleased to term Captain Clive fortunate and lucky; but, in my opinion, from the knowledge I have of the gentleman, he deserved and might expect from his conduct every thing as it fell out;—a man of an undaunted resolution, of a cool temper, and of a presence of mind which never left him in the greatest danger—born a soldier; for, without a military education of any sort, or much conversing with any of the profession, from his judgment and good sense, he led on an army like an experienced officer and a brave soldier, with a prudence that certainly warranted success."

The French had no commander to oppose to the two friends. Dupleix, not inferior in talents for negotiation and intrigue to any European who has borne a part in the revolutions of India, was not qualified to direct in person military operations. He had not been bred a soldier, and had no inclination to become one. His enemies accused him of personal cowardice; and he defended himself in a strain worthy of Captain Bobadil. He kept away from shot, he said, because silence and tranquillity were propitious to his genius, and he found it difficult to pursue his meditations amidst the noise of fire-arms. He was thus under the necessity of entrusting to others the execution of his great warlike designs; and he bitterly complained that he was ill-served. He had indeed been assisted by one officer of eminent merit, the celebrated Bussy. But Bussy had marched northward with the Nizam, and was fully employed in looking after his own interests, and those of France, at the court of that prince. Among the officers who remained with Dupleix, there was not a single man of talent; and many of them were boys, at whose ignorance and folly the common soldiers laughed.

The English triumphed every where. The besiegers of Trichinopoly were themselves besieged and compelled to capitulate. Chunda Sahib fell into the hands of the Mahrattas, and was put to death, at the instigation probably of his competitor, Mahommed Ali. The spirit of Dupleix, however, was unconquerable, and his resources inexhaustible. From his employers in Europe he no longer received help or countenance. They condemned his policy. They allowed him no pecuniary assistance. They sent him for troops only the sweepings of the galleys. Yet still he persisted, intrigued, bribed, promised;—lavished his private fortune, strained his credit, procured new diplomas from Delhi, raised up new enemies to the government of Madras on every side, and even among the allies of the English company. But all was in vain. Slowly, but steadily, the power of Britain continued to increase, and that of France to decline.

The health of Clive had never been good during his residence in India, and his constitution was now so much impaired that he determined to return to England. Before his departure he undertook a service of considerable difficulty, and performed it with his usual vigor and dexterity. The forts of Covelong and Chingleput were occupied by French garrisons. It was determined to send a force against them. But the only force available for this purpose was of such a description, that no officer but Clive would risk his reputation by commanding it. It consisted of five hundred newly levied sepoy and two hundred recruits who had just landed from

England, and who were the worst and lowest wretches that the company's crimps could pick up in the flash houses of London. Clive, ill and exhausted as he was, undertook to make an army of this undisciplined rabble, and marched with them to Covelong. A shot from the fort killed one of these extraordinary soldiers; on which all the rest faced about and ran away, and it was with the greatest difficulty that Clive rallied them. On another occasion, the noise of a gun terrified the sentinels so much, that one of them was found, some hours later, at the bottom of a well. Clive gradually accustomed them to danger, and by exposing himself constantly in the most perilous situations, shamed them into courage. He at length succeeded in forming a respectable force out of his unpromising materials. Covelong fell. Clive learned that a strong detachment was marching to relieve it from Chingleput. He took measures to prevent the enemy from learning that they were too late, laid an ambuscade for them on the road, killed a hundred of them with one fire, took three hundred prisoners, pursued the fugitives to the gates of Chingleput, laid siege instantly to that fastness, reputed one of the strongest in India, made a breach, and was on the point of storming when the French commandant capitulated and retired with his men.

Clive returned to Madras victorious, but in a state of health which rendered it impossible for him to remain there long. He married at this time a young lady of the name of Maskelyne, sister of the eminent mathematician, who long held the post of Astronomer-royal. She is described as handsome and accomplished, and her husband's letters, it is said, contain proofs that he was devotedly attached to her.

Almost immediately after the marriage, Clive embarked with his bride for England. He returned a very different person from the poor slighted boy who had been sent out ten years before to seek his fortune. He was only twenty-seven; yet his country already respected him as one of her first soldiers. There was then general peace in Europe. The Carnatic was the only part of the world where the English and French were in arms against each other. The vast schemes of Dupleix had excited no small uneasiness in the city of London; and the rapid turn of fortune, which was chiefly owing to the courage and talents of Clive, had been hailed with great delight. The young captain was known at the India House by the honorable nickname of General Clive, and was toasted by that appellation at the feasts of the directors. On his arrival in England, he found himself an object of general interest and admiration. The East India Company thanked him for his services in the warmest terms, and presented him with a sword set with diamonds. With rare delicacy, he declined to receive this token of gratitude, unless a similar compliment was paid to his friend and commander, Lawrence.

It may easily be supposed that Clive was most cordially welcomed home by his family, who were delighted by his success, though they seem to have been hardly able to comprehend how their naughty idle Bobby had become so great a man. His father had been singularly hard of belief. Not until the news of the defence of Arcot arrived in England was the old gentleman heard to growl out, that after all

the booby had something in him. His expressions of approbation became stronger and stronger as news arrived of one brilliant exploit after another; and he was at length immoderately fond and proud of his son.

Clive's relations had very substantial reasons for rejoicing at his return. Considerable sums of prize money had fallen to his share, and he had brought home several thousands, some of which he expended in extricating his father from pecuniary difficulties, and in redeeming the family estate. The remainder he appears to have dissipated in the course of about two years. He lived splendidly, dressed gaily even for those times, kept a carriage and saddle horses, and, not content with these ways of getting rid of his money, resorted to the most speedy and effectual of all modes of evacuation, a contested election followed by a petition.

At the time of the general election of 1754, the government was in a very singular state. There was scarcely any formal opposition. The Jacobites had been cowed by the issue of the last rebellion. The Tory party had fallen into utter contempt. It had been deserted by all the men of talents who had belonged to it, and had scarcely given a symptom of life during some years. The small faction which had been held together by the influence and promises of Prince Frederick, had been dispersed by his death. Almost every public man of distinguished talents in the kingdom, whatever his early connections had been, was in office, and called himself a Whig. But this extraordinary appearance of concord was quite delusive. The administration itself was distracted by bitter enmities and conflicting pretensions. The chief object of its members was to depress and supplant each other. The prime minister, Newcastle, weak, timid, jealous, and perfidious, was at once detested and despised by the most important members of his government, and by none more than by Henry Fox, the secretary of war. This able, daring and ambitious man seized every opportunity of crossing the first lord of the treasury, from whom he well knew that he had little to dread and little to hope; for Newcastle was through life equally afraid of breaking with men of parts and of promoting them.

Newcastle had set his heart on returning two members for St. Michael, one of those wretched Cornish boroughs which were swept away by the Reform Act in 1832. He was opposed by Lord Sandwich, whose influence had long been paramount there; and Fox exerted himself strenuously in Sandwich's behalf. Clive, who had been introduced to Fox, and very kindly received by him, was brought forward on the Sandwich interest, and was returned. But a petition was presented against the return, and was backed by the whole interest of the Duke of Newcastle.

The case was heard, according to the usage of that time, before a committee of the whole house. Questions respecting elections were then considered merely as party questions. Judicial impartiality was not even affected. Sir Robert Walpole was in the habit of saying openly, that in election battles there ought to be no quarter. On the present occasion the excitement was great. The matter really at issue was, not whether Clive had been properly or improperly returned; but whether Newcastle or Fox was to be master of the new house of commons, and

consequently first minister. The contest was long and obstinate, and success seemed to lean sometimes to one side and sometimes to the other. Fox put forth all his rare powers of debate, beat half the lawyers in the house at their own weapons, and carried division after division against the whole influence of the treasury. The committee decided in Clive's favor. But when the resolution was reported to the house, things took a different course. The remnant of the tory opposition, contemptible as it was, had yet sufficient weight to turn the scale between the nicely balanced parties of Newcastle and Fox. Newcastle the tories could only despise. Fox they hated as the boldest and most subtle politician, and the ablest debater among the whigs;—as the steady friend of Walpole, as the devoted adherent of the Duke of Cumberland. After wavering till the last moment, they determined to vote in a body with the prime minister's friends. The consequence was, that the house, by a small minority, rescinded the decision of the committee, and Clive was unseated.

Ejected from parliament, and straitened in his means, he naturally began to look again towards India. The company and the government were eager to avail themselves of his services. A treaty favourable to England had indeed been concluded in the Carnatic. Dupleix had been superseded, and had returned with the wreck of his immense fortune to Europe, where calumny and chicanery soon hunted him to his grave. But many signs indicated that a war between France and Great Britain was at hand, and it was therefore thought desirable to send an able commander to the company's settlements in India. The directors appointed Clive governor of Fort St. David. The king gave him the commission of a lieutenant-colonel in the British army, and in 1755 he again sailed for Asia.

The first service in which he was employed after his return to the east, was the reduction of the stronghold of Gheriah. This fortress, built on a craggy promontory, and almost surrounded by the ocean, was the den of a pirate named Angria, whose barks had long been the terror of the Arabian gulf. Admiral Watson, who commanded the English squadron in the eastern seas, burned Angria's fleet, while Clive attacked the fastness by land. The place soon fell, and a booty of a hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling was divided among the conquerors.

After this exploit, Clive proceeded to his government of Fort St. David. Before he had been there two months, he received intelligence which called forth all the energy of his bold and active mind.

Of the provinces which had been subject to the house of Tamerlane, the wealthiest was Bengal. No part of India possessed such natural advantages, both for agriculture and commerce. The Ganges, rushing through a hundred channels to the sea, has formed a vast plain of rich mould, which, even under the tropical sky, rivals the verdure of an English April. The rice fields yield an increase such as is elsewhere unknown. Spices, sugar, vegetable oils, are produced with similar exuberance. The rivers afford an inexhaustible supply of fish. The desolate islands along the sea coast, overgrown by noxious vegetation, and swarming with deer and tigers, supply the cultivated districts

with abundance of salt. The great stream which fertilizes the soil is, at the same time, the chief highway of eastern commerce. On its banks, and on those of its tributary waters, are the wealthiest marts, the most splendid capitals, and the most sacred shrines of India. The tyranny of man had for ages struggled in vain against the overflowing bounty of nature. In spite of the Mussulman despot, and of the Mahratta freebooter, Bengal was known through the east as the garden of Eden, as the rich kingdom. Its population multiplied exceedingly. Other provinces were nourished from the overflowing of its granaries; and the ladies of London and Paris were clothed in the delicate produce of its looms. The race by whom this rich tract was peopled, enervated by a soft climate and accustomed to peaceful avocations, bore the same relation to other Asiatics, which the Asiatics generally bear to the bold and energetic children of Europe. The Castilians have a proverb, that in Valencia the earth is water and the men women; and the description is at least equally applicable to the vast plain of the Lower Ganges. Whatever the Bengalee does, he does languidly. His favourite pursuits are sedentary. He shrinks from bodily exertion; and, though voluble in dispute, and singularly pertinacious in the war of chicane, he seldom engages in a personal conflict, and scarcely ever enlists as a soldier. We doubt whether there be a hundred genuine Bengalees in the whole army of the East India Company. There never, perhaps, existed a people so thoroughly fitted by nature and by habit for a foreign yoke.

The great commercial companies of Europe had long possessed factories in Bengal. The French were settled, as they still are, at Chandernagore on the Hoogley. Lower down the stream, the English had built Fort William. A church and ample warehouses rose in the vicinity. A row of spacious houses, belonging to the chief factors of the East India Company, lined the banks of the river; and in the neighbourhood had sprung up a large and busy native town, where some Hindoo merchants of great opulence had fixed their abode. But the tract now covered by the palaces of Chowringhee, contained only a few miserable huts thatched with straw. A jungle, abandoned to water-fowl and alligators, covered the site of the present citadel, and the course, which is now daily crowded at sunset with the gayest equipages of Calcutta. For the ground on which the settlement stood, the English, like other great landholders, paid rent to the government; and they were, like other great landholders, permitted to exercise a certain jurisdiction within their domain.

The great province of Bengal, together with Orissa and Babar, had long been governed by a viceroy, whom the English called Aliverdy Khan, and who, like the other viceroys of the Mogul, had become virtually independent. He died in 1756, and the sovereignty descended to his grandson, a youth under twenty, who bore the name of Surajah Dowlah. Oriental despots are perhaps the worst class of human beings; and this unhappy boy was one of the worst specimens of his class. His understanding was naturally feeble, and his temper naturally unamiable. His education had been such as would have enervated even a vigorous intellect, and perverted even a generous disposition. He was



unreasonable, because nobody ever dared to reason with him; and selfish, because he had never been made to feel himself dependent on the good-will of others. Early debauchery had unnerved his body and his mind. He indulged immoderately in the use of ardent spirits, which inflamed his weak brain almost to madness. His chosen companions were flatterers, sprung from the dregs of the people, and recommended by nothing but buffoonery and servility. It is said that he had arrived at that last stage of human depravity, when cruelty becomes pleasing for its own sake—when the sight of pain as pain, where no advantage is to be gained, no offence punished, no danger averted, is an agreeable excitement. It had early been his amusement to torture beasts and birds; and, when he grew up, he enjoyed with still keener relish the misery of his fellow-creatures.

From a child Surajah Dowlah had hated the English. It was his whim to do so; and his whims were never opposed. He had also formed a very exaggerated notion of the wealth which might be obtained by plundering them; and his feeble and uncultivated mind was incapable of perceiving that the riches of Calcutta, had they been even greater than he imagined, would not compensate him for what he must lose, if the European trade, of which Bengal was a chief seat, should be driven by his violence to some other quarter. Prettexts for a quarrel were readily found. The English, in expectation of a war with France, had begun to fortify their settlement without a special permission from the nabob. A rich native whom he longed to plunder, had taken refuge at Calcutta, and had not been delivered up. On such grounds as these Surajah Dowlah marched with a great army against Fort William.

The servants of the company at Madras had been forced by Dupleix to become statesmen and soldiers. Those in Bengal were still mere traders, and were terrified and bewildered by the approaching danger. The governor, who had heard much of Surajah Dowlah's cruelty, was frightened out of his wits, jumped into a boat, and took refuge in the nearest ship. The military commandant thought that he could not do better than follow so good an example. The fort was taken after a feeble resistance; and great numbers of the English fell into the hands of the conquerors. The nabob seated himself with regal pomp in the principal hall of the factory, and ordered Mr. Holwell, the first in rank among the prisoners, to be brought before him. He abused the insolence of the English, and grumbled at the smallness of the treasure which he had found; but promised to spare their lives, and retired to rest.

Then was committed that great crime, memorable for its singular atrocity, memorable for the tremendous retribution by which it was followed. The English captives were left at the mercy of the guards; and the guards determined to secure them for the night in the prison of the garrison, a chamber known by the fearful name of the Black Hole. Even for a single European malefactor, that dungeon would, in such a climate, have been too close and narrow. The space was only twenty feet square. The air-holes were small and obstructed. It was the summer solstice—the season when the fierce heat of Bengal can scarcely be rendered tolerable to

natives of England by lofty halls, and the constant waving of fans. The number of the prisoners was one hundred and forty-six. When they were ordered to enter the cell, they imagined that the soldiers were joking; and, being in high spirits on account of the promise of the nabob to spare their lives, they laughed and jested at the absurdity of the notion. They soon discovered their mistake. They expostulated; they entreated; but in vain. The guards threatened to cut down all who hesitated. The captives were driven into the cell at the point of the sword, and the door was instantly shut and locked upon them.

Nothing in history or fiction—not even the story which Ugolino told in the sea of everlasting ice, after he had wiped his bloody lips on the scalp of his murderer—approaches the horrors which were recounted by the few survivors of that night. They cried for mercy. They strove to burst the door. Holwell, who, even in that extremity, retained some presence of mind, offered large bribes to the gaolers. But the answer was, that nothing could be done without the nabob's orders; that the nabob was asleep, and that he would be angry if any body awoke him. Then the prisoners went mad with despair. They trampled each other down, fought for the places at the windows, fought for the pittance of water with which the cruel mercy of the murderers mocked their agonies—raved, prayed, blasphemed—implored the guard to fire among them. The gaolers in the mean time held lights to the bars, and shouted with laughter at the frantic struggles of their victims. At length the tumult died away in low gasps and moanings. The day broke. The nabob had slept off his debauch, and permitted the door to be opened. But it was some time before the soldiers could make a lane for the survivors, by piling up on each side the heaps of corpses, on which the burning climate had already begun to do its loathsome work. When at length a passage was made, twenty-three ghastly figures, such as their own mothers would not have known, staggered one by one out of the charnel-house. A pit was instantly dug. The dead bodies, a hundred and twenty-three in number, were flung into it promiscuously, and covered up.

But these things, which, after the lapse of more than eighty years, cannot be told or read without horror, awakened neither remorse nor pity in the bosom of the savage nabob. He inflicted no punishment on the murderers. He showed no tenderness to the survivors. Some of them, indeed, from whom nothing was to be got, were suffered to depart; but those from whom it was thought that any thing could be extorted, were treated with execrable cruelty. Holwell, unable to walk, was carried before the tyrant, who reproached him, threatened him, and sent him up the country in irons, together with some other gentlemen who were suspected of knowing more than they chose to tell about the treasures of the company. These persons, still bowed down by the sufferings of that great agony, were lodged in miserable sheds, and fed only with grain and water, till at length the intercessions of the female relations of the nabob procured their release. One Englishwoman had survived that night. She was placed in the harem of the prince, at Moorsshedabad.

Surajah Dowlah, in the mean time, sent letters to

his nominal sovereign at Delhi, describing the late conquest in the most pompous language. He placed a garrison in Fort William, forbade any Englishman to dwell in the neighbourhood, and directed that, in memory of his great actions, Calcutta should thenceforward be called Alinagore, that is to say, the Port of God.

In August the news of the fall of Calcutta reached Madras, and excited the fiercest and bitterest resentment. The cry of the whole settlement was for vengeance. Within forty-eight hours after the arrival of the intelligence, it was determined that an expedition should be sent to the Hoogley, and that Clive should be at the head of the land forces. The naval armament was under the command of Admiral Watson. Nine hundred English infantry—fine troops and full of spirit—and fifteen hundred sepoy, composed the army which sailed to punish a prince who had more subjects and larger revenues than the King of Prussia, or the Empress Maria Theresa. In October the expedition sailed; but it had to make its way against adverse winds, and did not reach Bengal till December.

The nabob was reveling in fancied security at Moorshedabad. He was so profoundly ignorant of the state of foreign countries, that he often used to say that there were not ten thousand men in all Europe; and it had never occurred to him as possible, that the English would dare to invade his dominions. But, though undisturbed by any fear of their military power, he began to mis' them greatly. His revenues fell off; and his ministers succeeded in making him understand that a ruler may sometimes find it more profitable to protect traders in the open enjoyment of their gains, than to put them to the torture for the purpose of discovering hidden chests of gold and jewels. He was already disposed to permit the company to resume its mercantile operations in his country, when he received the news that an English armament was in the Hoogley. He instantly ordered all his troops to assemble at Moorshedabad, and marched towards Calcutta.

Clive had commenced operations with his usual vigour. He took Budgebudge, routed the garrison of Fort William, recovered Calcutta, stormed and sacked Hoogley. The nabob, already disposed to make some concessions to the English, was confirmed in his pacific disposition by these proofs of their power and spirit. He accordingly made overtures to the chiefs of the invading armament, and offered to restore the factory, and to give compensation to those whom he had despoiled.

Clive's profession was war; and he felt that there was something discreditable in an accommodation with Surajah Dowlah. But his power was limited. A committee, chiefly composed of servants of the company who had fled from Calcutta, had the principal direction of affairs; and these persons were eager to be restored to their posts, and compensated for their losses. The government of Madras, apprised that war had commenced in Europe, and apprehensive of an attack from the French, became impatient for the return of the armament. The promises of the nabob were large, the chances of a contest doubtful; and Clive consented to treat—though he expressed his regret that things should not be concluded in so glorious a manner as he could have wished.

With this negotiation commences a new chapter in the life of Clive. Hitherto he had been merely a soldier, carrying into effect, with eminent ability and valour, the plans of others. Henceforth he is to be chiefly regarded as a statesman; and his military movements are to be considered as subordinate to his political designs. That in his new capacity he displayed great talents, and obtained great success, is undeniable. But it is also undeniable, that the transactions in which he now began to take a part, have left a stain on his moral character.

We can by no means agree with Sir John Malcolm, who is obstinately resolved to see nothing but honour and integrity in the conduct of his hero. But we can as little agree with Mr. Mill, who has gone so far as to say that Clive was a man "to whom deception, when it suited his purpose, never cost a pang." Clive seems to us to have been constitutionally the very opposite of a knave—bold even to temerity—sincere even to indiscretion—hearty in friendship—open in enmity. Neither in his private life, nor in those parts of his public life in which he had to do with his countrymen, do we find any signs of a propensity to cunning. On the contrary, in all the disputes in which he was engaged as an Englishman against Englishmen—from his boxing-matches at school, to the stormy altercations at the India House and in parliament, amidst which his later years were passed—his very faults were those of a high and magnanimous spirit. The truth seems to have been, that he considered oriental politics as a game in which nothing was unfair. He knew that the standard of morality among the natives of India differed widely from that established in England. He knew that he had to deal with men destitute of what in Europe is called honour—with men who would give any promise without hesitation, and break any promise without shame—with men who would unscrupulously employ corruption, perjury, forgery, to compass their ends. His letters show that the great difference between Asiatic and European morality was constantly in his thoughts. He seems to have imagined—most erroneously in our opinion—that he could effect nothing against such adversaries, if he was content to be bound by ties from which they were free—if he went on telling truth, and hearing none—if he fulfilled, to his own hurt, all his engagements with confederates who never kept an engagement that was not to their advantage. Accordingly, this man, in all the other parts of his life an honourable English gentleman and soldier, was no sooner matched against an Indian intriguer, than he became himself an Indian intriguer; and descended, without scruple, to falsehood, to hypocritical caresses, to the substitution of documents, and to the counterfeiting of hands.

The negotiations between the English and the nabob were carried on chiefly by two agents—Mr. Watts, a servant of the company, and a Bengalee of the name of Omichund. This Omichund had been one of the wealthiest native merchants resident at Calcutta, and had sustained great losses in consequence of the nabob's expedition against that place. In the course of his commercial transactions, he had seen much of the English, and was peculiarly qualified to serve as a medium of communication between them and a native court. He possessed great influence with his own race, and had in large measure

the Hindoo talents—quick observation, tact, dexterity, perseverance—and the Hindoo vices—servility, greediness, and treachery.

The nabob behaved with all the faithlessness of an Indian statesman, and all the levity of a boy whose mind had been enfeebled by power and self-indulgence. He promised, retracted, hesitated, evaded. At one time he advanced with his army in a threatening manner towards Calcutta; but when he saw the resolute front which the English presented, he fell back in alarm, and consented to make peace with them on their own terms. The treaty was no sooner concluded, than he formed new designs against them. He intrigued with the French authorities at Chandernagore. He invited Bussy to march from the Deccan to the Hoogley, and to drive the English out of Bengal. All this was well known to Clive and Watson. They determined accordingly to strike a decisive blow, and to attack Chandernagore, before the force there could be strengthened by new arrivals, either from the south of India or from Europe. Watson directed the expedition by water, Clive by land. The success of the combined movements was rapid and complete. The fort, the garrison, the artillery, the military stores, all fell into the hands of the English. Nearly five hundred European troops were among the prisoners.

The nabob had feared and hated the English, even while he was still able to oppose to them their French rivals. The French were now vanquished; and he began to regard the English with still greater fear, and still greater hatred. His weak and unprincipled mind oscillated between servility and insolence. One day he sent a large sum to Calcutta, as part of the compensation due for the wrongs which he had committed. The next day he sent a present of jewels to Bussy, exhorting that distinguished officer to hasten to protect Bengal "against Clive, the daring in war, on whom," says his highness, "may all bad fortune attend." He ordered his army to march against the English. He countermanded his orders. He tore Clive's letters: He then sent answers in the most florid language of compliment. He ordered Watts out of his presence, and threatened to impale him. He again sent for him, and begged pardon for his intemperance. In the mean time, his wretched maladministration, his folly, his dissolute manners, and his love of the lowest company, had disgusted all classes of his subjects—soldiers, traders, civil functionaries, the proud and ostentatious Mahomedans, the timid, supple, and parsimonious Hindoos. A formidable confederacy was formed against him; in which were included Roydullub, the minister of finance, Meer Jaffier, the principal commander of the troops, and Juggut Seit, the richest banker in India. The plot was confided to the English agents, and a communication was opened between the malecontents at Moorshedabad, and the committee at Calcutta.

In the committee there was much hesitation; but Clive's voice was given in favour of the conspirators, and his vigour and firmness bore down all opposition. It was determined that the English should lend their powerful assistance to depose Surajah Dowlah, and to place Meer Jaffier on the throne of Bengal. In return, Meer Jaffier promised ample compensation to the company and its servants, and a liberal donative to the army, the navy, and the

committee. The odious vices of Surajah Dowlah, the wrongs which the English had suffered at his hands, the dangers to which our trade must have been exposed had he continued to reign, appear to us fully to justify the resolution of deposing him. But nothing can justify the dissimulation which Clive stooped to practise. He wrote to Surajah Dowlah in terms so affectionate that they for a time lulled that weak prince to perfect security. The same courier who carried this "soothing letter," as Clive calls it, to the nabob, carried to Mr. Watts a letter in the following terms:—"Tell Meer Jaffier to fear nothing. I will join him with five thousand men who never turned their backs. Assure him I will march night and day to his assistance, and stand by him as long as I have a man left."

It was impossible that a plot which had so many ramifications should long remain entirely concealed. Enough reached the ears of the nabob to arouse his suspicions. But he was soon quieted by the fictions and artifices which the inventive genius of Omichund produced with miraculous readiness. All was going well; the plot was nearly ripe; when Clive learned that Omichund was likely to play false. The artful Bengalee had been promised a liberal compensation for all that he had lost at Calcutta. But this would not satisfy him. His services had been great. He held the thread of the whole intrigue. By one word breathed in the ear of Surajah Dowlah, he could undo all that he had done. The lives of Watts, of Meer Jaffier, of all the conspirators, were at his mercy; and he determined to take advantage of his situation, and to make his own terms. He demanded three hundred thousand pounds sterling, as the price of his secrecy and of his assistance. The committee, incensed by the treachery, and appalled by the danger, knew not what course to take. But Clive was more than Omichund's match in Omichund's own art. The man, he said, was a villain. Any artifice which would defeat such knavery was justifiable. The best course would be to promise what was asked. Omichund would soon be at their mercy, and then they might punish him by withholding from him, not only the bribe which he now demanded, but also the compensation which all the other sufferers of Calcutta were to receive.

His advice was taken; but how was the wary and sagacious Hindoo to be deceived? He had demanded that an article touching his claims should be inserted in the treaty between Meer Jaffier and the English, and he would not be satisfied unless he saw it with his own eyes. Clive had an expedient ready. Two treaties were drawn up, one on white paper, the other on red—the former real, the latter fictitious. In the former Omichund's name was not mentioned; the latter, which was to be shown to him, contained a stipulation in his favour.

But another difficulty arose. Admiral Watson had scruples about signing the red treaty. Omichund's vigilance and acuteness were such, that the absence of so important a name would probably awaken his suspicions. But Clive was not a man to do any thing by halves. We almost blush to write it. He forged Admiral Watson's name.

All was now ready for action. Mr. Watts fled secretly from Moorshedabad. Clive put his troops in motion, and wrote to the nabob in a tone very different from that of his previous letters. He set

forth all the wrongs which the British had suffered, offered to submit the points in dispute to the arbitration of Meer Jaffier; and concluded by announcing that, as the rains were about to set in, he and his men would do themselves the honour of waiting on his highness for an answer.

Surajah Dowlah instantly assembled his whole force, and marched to encounter the English. 'It had been agreed that Meer Jaffier should separate himself from the nabob, and carry over his division to Clive. But, as the decisive moment approached, the fears of the conspirator overpowered his ambition. Clive had advanced to Cossimbuzar; the nabob lay with a mighty power a few miles off at Plassey; and still Meer Jaffier delayed to fulfil his engagements, and returned evasive answers to the earnest remonstrances of the English general.

Clive was in a painfully anxious situation. He could place no confidence in the sincerity or in the courage of his confederate; and, whatever confidence he might place in his own military talents, and in the valour and discipline of his troops, it was no light thing to engage an army twenty times as numerous as his own. Before him lay a river over which it was easy to advance, but over which, if things went ill, not one of his little band would ever return. On this occasion, for the first and for the last time, his dauntless spirit, during a few hours, shrank from the fearful responsibility of making a decision. He called a council of war. The majority pronounced against fighting; and Clive declared his concurrence with the majority. Long afterwards, he said that he had never called but one council of war, and that, if he had taken the advice of that council, the British would never have been masters of Bengal. But scarcely had the meeting broken up when he was himself again. He retired alone under the shade of some trees, and passed near an hour there in thought. He came back determined to put every thing to the hazard, and gave orders that all should be in readiness for passing the river on the morrow.

The river was passed, and at the close of a toilsome day's march, the army, long after sunset, took up its quarters in a grove of mango-trees near Plassey, within a mile of the enemy. Clive was unable to sleep: he heard, through the whole night, the sound of drums and cymbals from the vast camp of the nabob. 'It is not strange that even his stout heart should now and then have sunk when he reflected against what odds and for what a prize he was in a few hours to contend.

Nor was the rest of Surajah Dowlah more peaceful. His mind, at once weak and stormy, was distracted by wild and horrible apprehensions. Appalled by the greatness and nearness of the crisis, distrusting his captains, dreading every one who approached him, dreading to be left alone, he sat gloomily in his tent, haunted, a Greek poet would have said, by the furies of those who had cursed him with their last breath in the Black Hole.

The day broke—the day which was to decide the fate of India. At sunrise the army of the nabob, pouring through many openings from the camp, began to move towards the grove where the English lay. Forty thousand infantry, armed with firelocks, pikes, swords, bows and arrows, covered the plain. They were accompanied by fifty pieces of ordnance of the

largest size, each tugged by a long team of white oxen, and each pushed on from behind by an elephant. Some smaller guns, under the direction of a few French auxiliaries, were perhaps more formidable. The cavalry were fifteen thousand, drawn, not from the effeminate population of Bengal, but from the bolder race which inhabits the northern provinces; and the practised eye of Clive could perceive that both the men and the horses were more powerful than those of the Carnatic. The force which he had to oppose to this great multitude consisted of only three thousand men. But of these nearly a thousand were English, and all were led by English officers, and trained in the English discipline. Conspicuous in the ranks of the little army were the men of the Thirty-Ninth Regiment, which still bears on its colours, amidst many honourable additions won under Wellington in Spain and Gascony, the name of Plassey, and the proud motto, *Primus in Indis*.

The battle commenced with a cannonade in which the artillery of the nabob did scarcely any execution, while the few field-pieces of the English produced great effect. Several of the most distinguished officers in Surajah Dowlah's service fell. Disorder began to spread through his ranks. His own terror increased every moment. One of the conspirators urged on him the expediency of retreating. The insidious advice, agreeing as it did with what his own terrors suggested, was readily received. He ordered the army to fall back, and this order decided his fate. Clive snatched the moment, and ordered his troops to advance. The confused and dispirited multitude gave way before the onset of disciplined valour. No mob attacked by regular soldiers was ever more completely routed. The little band of Frenchmen, who alone ventured to confront the English, were swept down the stream of fugitives. In an hour the forces of Surajah Dowlah were dispersed, never to re-assemble. Only five hundred of the vanquished were slain. But their camp, their guns, their baggage, innumerable waggons, innumerable cattle, remained in the power of the conquerors. With the loss of twenty-two soldiers killed, and fifty wounded, Clive had scattered an army of nearly sixty thousand men, and subdued an empire larger and more populous than Great Britain.

Meer Jaffier had given no assistance to the English during the action. But, as soon as he saw that the fate of the day was decided, he drew off his division of the army, and when the battle was over, sent his congratulations to his ally. The next day he repaired to the English quarters, not a little uneasy as to the reception which awaited him there. He gave evident signs of alarm when a guard was drawn out to receive him with the honours due to his rank. But his apprehensions were speedily removed. Clive came forward to meet him, embraced him, saluted him as Nabob of the three great provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, listened graciously to his apologies, and advised him to march without delay to Moorshedabad.

Surajah Dowlah had fled from the field of battle with all the speed with which a fleet camel could carry him, and arrived at Moorshedabad in little more than twenty-four hours. There he called his councillors round him. The wisest advised him to put himself into the hands of the English, from whom he had nothing worse to fear than deposition and confinement. But he attributed this suggestion



to treachery. Others urged him to try the chance of war again. He approved the advice, and issued orders accordingly. But he wanted spirit to adhere even during one day to a manly resolution. He learned that Meer Jaffier had arrived; and his terrors became insupportable. Disguised in a mean dress, with a casket of jewels in his hand, he let himself down at night from a window of his palace, and, accompanied by only two attendants, embarked on the river for Patna.

In a few days Clive arrived at Moorshedabad, escorted by two hundred English soldiers, and three hundred sepoy. For his residence had been assigned a palace, which was surrounded by a garden so spacious that all the troops who accompanied him could conveniently encamp within it. The ceremony of the installation of Meer Jaffier was instantly performed. Clive led the new nabob to the seat of honour, placed him on it, presented to him, after the immemorial fashion of the East, an offering of gold, and then, turning to the natives who filled the hall, congratulated them on the good fortune which had freed them from a tyrant. He was compelled on this occasion to use the services of an interpreter; for it is remarkable that, long as he resided in India, intimately acquainted as he was with Indian politics and the Indian character, and adored as he was by his Indian soldiery, he never learned to express himself with facility in any Indian language; and is said to have been sometimes under the necessity of employing the smattering of Portuguese which he had acquired, when a lad, in Brazil.

The new sovereign was now called upon to fulfil the engagements into which he had entered with his allies. A conference was held at the house of Jugget Seit, the great banker, for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements. Omichund came thither, fully believing himself to stand high in the favour of Clive, who, with dissimulation surpassing even the dissimulation of Bengal, had up to that day treated him with undiminished kindness. The white treaty was produced and read. Clive then turned to Mr. Scrafton, one of the servants of the company, and said in English, "it is now time to undeceive Omichund." "Omichund," said Mr. Scrafton in Hindostanee, "the red treaty is a take-in. You are to have nothing." Omichund fell back insensible into the arms of his attendants. He revived; but his mind was irreparably ruined. Clive, who, though unscrupulous in his dealings with Indian politicians, was not inhuman, seems to have been touched. He saw Omichund a few days later, spoke to him kindly, advised him to make a pilgrimage to one of the great temples of India, in the hope that change of scene might restore his health, and was even disposed, notwithstanding all that had passed, again to employ his talents in the public service. But from the moment of that sudden shock, the unhappy man sank gradually into idiocy. He who had formerly been distinguished by the strength of his understanding, and the simplicity of his habits, now squandered the remains of his fortune on childish trinkets, and loved to exhibit himself dressed in rich garments, and hung with precious stones. In this abject state he languished a few months, and then died.

We should not think it necessary to offer any remarks for the purpose of directing the judgment of our readers with respect to this transaction, had not

Sir John Malcolm undertaken to defend it in all its parts. He regrets, indeed, that it was necessary to employ means so liable to abuse as forgery; but he will not admit that any blame attaches to those who deceived the deceiver. He thinks that the English were not bound to keep faith with one who kept no faith with them; and that, if they had fulfilled their engagements with the wily Bengalee, so signal an example of successful treason would have produced a crowd of imitators. Now we will not discuss this point on any rigid principles of morality. Indeed, it is quite unnecessary to do so; for, looking at the question as a question of expediency in the lowest sense of the word, and using no arguments but such as Machiavelli might have employed in his conferences with Borgia, we are convinced that Clive was altogether in the wrong, and that he committed, not merely a crime, but a blunder. That honesty is the best policy, is a maxim which we firmly believe to be generally correct, even with respect to the temporal interest of individuals; but, with respect to societies, the rule is subject to still fewer exceptions, and that for this reason, that the life of societies is longer than the life of individuals. It is possible to mention men who have owed great worldly prosperity to breaches of private faith. But we doubt whether it be possible to mention a state which has on the whole been a gainer by a breach of public faith. The entire history of British India is an illustration of this great truth, that it is not prudent to oppose perfidy to perfidy—that the most efficient weapon with which men can encounter falsehood is truth. During a long course of years, the English rulers of India, surrounded by allies and enemies whom no engagement could bind, have generally acted with sincerity and uprightness; and the event has proved that sincerity and uprightness are wisdom. English valour and English intelligence have done less to extend and to preserve our oriental empire than English veracity. All that we could have gained by imitating the doublings, the evasions, the fictions, the perjuries which have been employed against us, is as nothing, when compared with what we have gained by being the one power in India on whose word reliance can be placed. No oath which superstition can devise, no hostage however precious, inspires a hundredth part of the confidence which is produced by the "yea, yea," and "nay nay," of a British envoy. No fastness, however strong by art or nature, gives to its inmates a security like that enjoyed by the chief who, passing through the territories of powerful and deadly enemies, is armed with the British guarantee. The mightiest princes of the East can scarcely, by the offer of enormous usury, draw forth any portion of the wealth which is concealed under the hearths of their subjects. The British government offers little more than four per cent., and avarice hastens to bring forth tens of millions of rupees from its most secret repositories. A hostile monarch may promise mountains of gold to our sepoy, on condition that they will desert the standard of the company. The company promises only a moderate pension after a long service. But every sepoy knows that the promise of the company will be kept; he knows that if he lives a hundred years, his rice and salt are as secure as the salary of the governor-general; and he knows that there is not another state in India which would not, in spite of

the most solemn vows, leave him to die of hunger in a ditch as soon as he ceased to be useful. The greatest advantage which a government can possess, is to be the one trustworthy government in the midst of governments which nobody can trust. This advantage we enjoy in Asia. Had we acted during the last two generations on the principles which Sir John Malcolm appears to have considered as sound—had we, as often as we had to deal with people like Omichund, retaliated by lying, and forging, and breaking faith, after their fashion—it is our firm belief that no courage or capacity could have upheld our empire.

Sir John Malcolm admits that Clive's breach of faith could be justified only by the strongest necessity. As we think that breach of faith not only unnecessary, but most inexpedient, we need hardly say that we condemn it most severely.

Omichund was not the only victim of the revolution. Surajah Dowlah was taken a few days after his flight, and was brought before Meer Jaffier. There he flung himself on the ground in convulsions of fear, and with tears and loud cries implored the mercy which he had never shown. Meer Jaffier hesitated; but his son Meeran, a youth of seventeen, who, in feebleness of brain and savageness of nature, greatly resembled the wretched captive, was implacable. Surajah Dowlah was led into a secret chamber, to which in a short time the ministers of death were sent. In this act the English bore no part; and Meer Jaffier understood so much of their feelings, that he thought it necessary to apologise to them for having avenged them on their most malignant enemy.

The shower of wealth now fell copiously on the company and its servants. A sum of eight hundred thousand pounds sterling, in coined silver, was sent down the river from Moorshedabad to Fort William. The fleet which conveyed this treasure consisted of more than a hundred boats, and performed its triumphal voyage with flags flying and music playing. Calcutta, which, but a few months ago, had been desolate, was now more prosperous than ever. Trade revived; and the signs of affluence appeared in every English house. As to Clive, there was no limit to his acquisitions but his own moderation. The treasury of Bengal was thrown open to him. There were piled up, after the usage of Indian princes, immense masses of coin, among which might not seldom be detected the florins and byzants with which, before any European ship had turned the Cape of Good Hope, the Venetians purchased the stuffs and spices of the East. Clive walked between heaps of gold and silver, crowned with rubies and diamonds, and was at liberty to help himself. He accepted between two and three hundred thousand pounds.

The pecuniary transactions between Meer Jaffier and Clive were sixteen years later condemned by the public voice, and severely criticised in parliament. They are vehemently defended by Sir John Malcolm. The accusers of the victorious general represented his gains as the wages of corruption, or as plunder extorted at the point of the sword from a helpless ally. The biographer, on the other hand, considers these great acquisitions as free gifts, honourable alike to the donor and to the receiver, and compares them to the rewards bestowed by foreign powers on Marlborough, on Nelson, and on Wellington. It

had always, he says, been customary in the East to give and receive presents; and there was, as yet, no act of parliament positively prohibiting English functionaries in India from profiting by this Asiatic usage. This reasoning, we own, does not quite satisfy us. We fully acquit Clive of selling the interests of his employers or his country; but we cannot acquit him of having done what, if not in itself evil, was yet of evil example. Nothing is more clear than that a general ought to be the servant of his own government, and of no other. It follows, that whatever rewards he receives for his services ought to be given either by his own government, or with the full knowledge and approbation of his own government. This rule ought to be strictly maintained even with respect to the merest bauble—with respect to a cross, a medal, or a yard of coloured riband. But how can any government be well served if those who command its forces are at liberty, without its permission, without its privity, to accept princely fortunes from its allies? It is idle to say that there was then no act of parliament prohibiting the practice of taking presents from Asiatic sovereigns. It is not on the act which was passed at a later period for the purpose of preventing any such taking of presents, but on grounds which were valid before that act was passed—on grounds of common law and common sense—that we arraign the conduct of Clive. There is no act that we know of, prohibiting the secretary of state for foreign affairs from being in the pay of continental powers. But it is not the less true that a secretary who should receive a secret pension from France, would grossly violate his duty, and would deserve severe punishment. Sir John Malcolm compares the conduct of Clive with that of the Duke of Wellington. Suppose—and we beg pardon for putting such a supposition even for the sake of argument—that the Duke of Wellington had, after the campaign of 1815, and while he commanded the army of occupation in France, privately accepted two hundred thousand pounds from Louis the Eighteenth, as a mark of gratitude for the great services which his grace had rendered to the house of Bourbon—what would be thought of such a transaction? Yet the statute-book no more forbids the taking of presents in Europe now, than it forbade the taking of presents in Asia then.

At the same time, it must be admitted, that in Clive's case there were many extenuating circumstances. He considered himself as the general, not of the crown, but of the company. The company had, by implication at least, authorised its agents to enrich themselves by means of the liberality of the native princes, and by other means still more objectionable. It was hardly to be expected that the servant should entertain stricter notions of his duty than were entertained by his masters. Though Clive did not distinctly acquaint his employers with what had taken place, and request their sanction, he did not, on the other hand, by studied concealment, show that he was conscious of having done wrong. On the contrary, he avowed with the greatest openness that the nabob's bounty had raised him to affluence. Lastly, though we think that he ought not in such a way to have taken any thing, we must admit that he deserves praise for having taken so little. He accepted twenty lacs of rupees. It would have cost him only a word to make the twenty forty. It was a

very easy exercise of virtue to declaim in England against Clive's rapacity; but not one in a hundred of his accusers would have showed so much self-command in the treasury of Moorsheadabad.

Meer Jaffier could be upheld on the throne only by the hand which had placed him on it. He was not, indeed, a mere boy; nor had he been so unfortunate as to be born in the purple. He was not therefore quite so imbecile or quite as depraved as his predecessor had been. But he had none of the talents or virtues which his post required; and his son and heir, Meeran, was another Surajah Dowlah. The recent revolution had unsettled the minds of men. Many chiefs were in open insurrection against the new nabob. The viceroy of the rich and powerful province of Oude, who, like the other viceroys of the Mogul, was now in truth an independent sovereign, menaced Bengal with invasion. Nothing but the talents and authority of Clive could support the tottering government. While things were in this state, a ship arrived with despatches, which had been written at the India House before the news of the battle of Plassey had reached London. The directors had determined to place the English settlements in Bengal under a government constituted in the most cumbrous and absurd manner; and, to make the matter worse, no place in the arrangement was assigned to Clive. The persons who were selected to form this new government, greatly to their honour, took on themselves the responsibility of disobeying these preposterous orders, and invited Clive to exercise the supreme authority. He consented; and it soon appeared that the servants of the company had only anticipated the wishes of their employers. The directors, on receiving news of Clive's brilliant success, instantly appointed him governor of their possessions in Bengal, with the highest marks of gratitude and esteem. His power was now boundless, and far surpassed even that which Duplex had attained in the south of India. Meer Jaffier regarded him with slavish awe. On one occasion, the nabob spoke with severity to a native chief of high rank, whose followers had been engaged in a brawl with some of the company's sepoys. "Are you yet to learn," he said, "who that Colonel Clive is, and in what station God has placed him?" The chief, who, as a famous jester and an old friend of Meer Jaffier, could venture to take liberties, answered, "I affront the colonel—I, who never get up in the morning without making three low bows to his jackass!" This was hardly an exaggeration. Europeans and natives were alike at Clive's feet. The English regarded him as the only man who could force Meer Jaffier to keep his engagements with them. Meer Jaffier regarded him as the only man who could protect the new dynasty against turbulent subjects and encroaching neighbours.

It is but justice to say, that Clive used his power ably and vigorously for the advantage of his country. He sent forth an expedition against the tract lying to the north of the Carnatic. In this tract the French still had the ascendancy; and it was important to dislodge them. The conduct of the enterprise was entrusted to an officer of the name of Forde, who was then little known, but in whom the keen eye of the governor had detected military talents of a high order. The success of the expedition was rapid and splendid.

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While a considerable part of the army of Bengal was thus engaged at a distance, a new and formidable danger menaced the western frontier. The great Mogul was a prisoner at Delhi, in the hands of a subject. His eldest son, named Shah Alum, destined to be the sport, during many years, of adverse fortune, and to be a tool in the hands, first of the Mahrattas, and then of the English, had fled from the palace of his father. His birth was still revered in India. Some powerful princes, the nabob of Oude in particular, were inclined to favour him. He found it easy to draw to his standard great numbers of the military adventurers with whom every part of the country swarmed. An army of forty thousand men, of various races and religions, Mahrattas, Rohillas, Jants, and Afghans, was speedily assembled round him; and he formed the design of overthrowing the upstart whom the English had elevated to a throne, and of establishing his own authority throughout Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar.

Jaffier's terror was extreme; and the only expedient which occurred to him was to purchase, by the payment of a large sum of money, an accommodation with Shah Alum. This expedient had been repeatedly employed by those who, before him, had ruled the rich and unwarlike provinces near the mouth of the Ganges. But Clive treated the suggestion with a scorn worthy of his strong sense and dauntless courage. "If you do this," he wrote, "you will have the nabob of Oude, the Mahrattas, and many more, come from all parts of the confines of your country, who will bully you out of money till you have none left in your treasury. I beg your excellency will rely on the fidelity of the English, and of those troops which are attached to you." He wrote in a similar strain to the governor of Patna, a brave native soldier, whom he highly esteemed. "Come to no terms: defend your city to the last. Rest assured that the English are staunch and firm friends, and that they never desert a cause in which they have once taken a part."

He kept his word. Shah Alum had invested Patna, and was on the point of proceeding to storm, when he learned that the colonel was advancing, by forced marches. The whole army which was approaching consisted of only four hundred and fifty Europeans and two thousand five hundred sepoys. But Clive and his Englishmen were now objects of dread over all the east. As soon as his advanced guard appeared, the besiegers fled before him. A few French adventurers who were about the person of the prince, advised him to try the chance of battle; but in vain. In a few days this great army, which had been regarded with so much uneasiness by the court of Moorsheadabad, melted away before the mere terror of the British name.

The conqueror returned in triumph to Fort William. The joy of Meer Jaffier was as unbounded as his fears had been, and led him to bestow on his preserver a princely token of gratitude. The quit-rent which the East India Company was bound to pay to the nabob for the extensive lands held by them to the south of Calcutta, amounted to near thirty thousand pounds sterling a year. The whole of this splendid estate, sufficient to support with dignity the highest rank of the British peerage, was now conferred on Clive for life.

This present we think Clive justified in accepting.

It was a present which, from its very nature, could be no secret. In fact, the company itself was his tenant, and, by its acquiescence, signified its approbation of Meer Jaffier's grant.

But the gratitude of Meer Jaffier did not last long. He had for some time felt that the powerful ally who had set him up, might pull him down, and had been looking round for support against the formidable strength by which he had himself been hitherto supported. He knew that it would be impossible to find among the natives of India any force which would look the colonel's little army in the face. The French power in Bengal was extinct. But the fame of the Dutch had anciently been great in the eastern seas; and it was not yet distinctly known in Asia how much the power of Holland had declined in Europe. Secret communications passed between the court of Moorshedabad, and the Dutch factory at Chinsura; and urgent letters were sent from Chinsura, exhorting the government of Batavia to fit out an expedition which might balance the power of the English in Bengal. The authorities of Batavia, eager to extend the influence of their country—still more eager to obtain for themselves a share of the wealth which had recently raised so many English adventurers to opulence—equipped a powerful armament. Seven large ships from Java arrived unexpectedly in the Hoogley. The military force on board amounted to fifteen hundred men, of whom about one-half were Europeans. The enterprise was well timed. Clive had sent such large detachments to oppose the French in the Carnatic, that his army was now inferior in number to that of the Dutch. He knew that Meer Jaffier secretly favoured the invaders. He knew that he took on himself a serious responsibility, if he attacked the forces of a friendly power; that the English ministers could not wish to see a war with Holland added to that in which they were already engaged with France; that they might disavow his acts; that they might punish him. He had recently remitted a great part of his fortune to Europe, through the Dutch East India Company; and he had therefore a strong interest in avoiding any quarrel. But he was satisfied, that if he suffered the Batavian armament to pass up the river and to join the garrison at Chinsura, Meer Jaffier would throw himself into the arms of these new allies, and that the English ascendancy in Bengal would be exposed to most serious danger. He took his resolution with characteristic boldness, and was most ably seconded by his officers, particularly by Colonel Forde, to whom the most important part of the operations was entrusted. The Dutch attempted to force a passage. The English encountered them both by land and water. On both elements the enemy had a great superiority of force. On both they were signally defeated. Their ships were taken. Their troops were put to a total rout. Almost all the European soldiers, who constituted the main strength of the invading army, were killed or taken. The conquerors sat down before Chinsura; and the chiefs of that settlement, now thoroughly humbled, consented to the terms which Clive dictated. They engaged to build no fortifications, and to raise no troops beyond a small force necessary for the police of their factories; and it was distinctly provided that any violation of these covenants should be punished with instant expulsion from Bengal.

Three months after this great victory, Clive sailed for England. At home, honours and rewards awaited him—not indeed equal to his claims or to his ambition; but still such as, when his age, his rank in the army, and his original place in society are considered, must be pronounced rare and splendid. He was raised to the Irish peerage, and encouraged to expect an English title. George the Third, who had just ascended the throne, received him with great distinction. The ministers paid him marked attention; and Pitt, whose influence in the house of commons and in the country was unbounded, was eager to mark his regard for one whose exploits had contributed so much to the lustre of that memorable period. The great orator had already in parliament described Clive as a heaven-born general,—a man, who, bred to the labour of the desk, had displayed a military genius which might excite the admiration of the king of Prussia. There were then no reporters in the gallery; but these words, emphatically spoken by the first statesman of the age, had passed from mouth to mouth, had been transmitted to Clive in Bengal, and had greatly delighted and flattered him. Indeed, since the death of Wolfe, Clive was the only English general of whom his countrymen had much reason to be proud. The Duke of Cumberland had been generally unfortunate; and his single victory having been gained over his countrymen, and used with merciless severity, had been more fatal to his popularity than his many defeats. Conway, versed in the learning of his profession, and personally courageous, wanted vigour and capacity. Granby, honest, generous, and as brave as a lion, had neither science nor genius. Sackville, inferior in knowledge and abilities to none of his contemporaries, had incurred, unjustly as we believe, the imputation most fatal to the character of a soldier. It was under the command of a foreign general that the British had triumphed at Minden and Warburg. The people therefore, as was natural, greeted with pride and delight a captain of their own, whose native courage and self-taught skill had placed him on a level with the great tacticians of Germany.

The wealth of Clive was such as enabled him to vie with the first grantees of England. There remains proof that he had remitted more than a hundred and eighty thousand pounds through the Dutch East India Company, and more than forty thousand pounds through the English company. The amount which he sent home, through private houses, was also considerable. He invested great sums in jewels, then a very common mode of remittance from India. His purchases of diamonds, at Madras alone, amounted to twenty-five thousand pounds. Besides a great mass of ready money, he had his Indian estate, valued by himself at twenty-seven thousand a year. His whole annual income, in the opinion of Sir John Malcolm, who is desirous to state it as low as possible, exceeded forty thousand pounds; and incomes of forty thousand pounds at the time of the accession of George the Third, were at least as rare as incomes of a hundred thousand pounds now. We may safely affirm, that no Englishman who started with nothing, has ever, in any line of life, created such a fortune at the early age of thirty-four. It would be unjust not to add that he made a creditable use of his riches. As soon as the



battle of Plassey had laid the foundation of his fortune, he sent ten thousand pounds to his sisters, bestowed as much more on other poor friends and relations, ordered his agent to pay eight hundred a year to his parents, and to insist that they should keep a carriage, and settled five hundred a year on his old commander Lawrence, whose means were very slender. The whole sum which he expended in this manner, may be calculated at fifty thousand pounds.

He now set himself to cultivate parliamentary interest. His purchases of land seem to have been made in a great measure with that view; and after the general election of 1761, he found himself in the house of commons, at the head of a body of dependents whose support must have been important to any administration. In English politics, however, he did not take a prominent part. His first attachments, as we have seen, were to Mr. Fox; at a later period he was attracted by the genius and success of Mr. Pitt; but finally, he connected himself in the closest manner with George Grenville. Early in the session of 1764, when the illegal and impolitic persecution of that worthless demagogue Wilkes had strongly excited the public mind, the town was amused by an anecdote, which we have seen in some unpublished memoirs of Horace Walpole. Old Mr. Richard Clive, who, since his son's elevation, had been introduced into society for which his former habits had not well fitted him, presented himself at the levee. The king asked him where Lord Clive was. "He will be in town very soon," said the old gentleman, loud enough to be heard by the whole circle, "and then your majesty will have another vote."

But in truth all Clive's views were directed towards the country in which he had so eminently distinguished himself as a soldier and a statesman; and it was by considerations relating to India that his conduct as a public man in England was regulated. The power of the company, though an anomaly, is in our time, we are firmly persuaded, a beneficial anomaly. In the time of Clive, it was not merely an anomaly but a nuisance. There was no board of control. The directors were for the most part mere traders, ignorant of general politics, ignorant of the peculiarities of the empire which had strangely become subject to them. The court of proprietors, wherever it chose to interfere, was able to have its way. That court was more numerous, as well as more powerful than at present; for, then, every share of five hundred pounds conferred a vote. The meetings were large, stormy, even riotous—the debates indecently virulent. All the turbulence of a Westminster election, all the trickery and corruption of a Grampound election, disgraced the proceedings of this assembly on questions of the most solemn importance. Fictitious votes were manufactured on a gigantic scale. Clive himself laid out a hundred thousand pounds in the purchase of stock, which he then divided among nominal proprietors on whom he could depend, and whom he brought down in his train to every discussion and every ballot. Others did the same, though not to quite so enormous an extent.

The interest taken by the public of England in Indian questions was then far greater than at present, and the reason is obvious. At present a writer enters the service young; he climbs slowly; he is

rather fortunate if, at forty-five, he can return to his country with an annuity of a thousand a year, and with savings amounting to thirty thousand pounds. A great quantity of wealth is made by English functionaries in India; but no single functionary makes a very large fortune, and what is made is slowly, hardly, and honestly earned. Only four or five high political offices are reserved for public men from England. The residencies, the secretaryships, the seats in the boards of revenue and in the Sudder courts, are all filled by men who have given the best years of life to the service of the company; nor can any talents however splendid, nor any connections however powerful, obtain those lucrative posts for any person who has not entered by the regular door, and mounted by the regular gradations. Seventy years ago, much less money was brought home from the east than in our time. But it was divided among a very much smaller number of persons, and immense sums were often accumulated in a few months. Any Englishman, whatever his age might be, might hope to be one of the lucky emigrants. If he made a good speech in Leadenhall street, or published a clever pamphlet in defence of the chairman, he might be sent out in the company's service, and might return home in three or four years as rich as Pigot or as Clive. Thus the India House was a lottery office, which invited every body to take a chance, and held out ducal fortunes as the prizes destined for the lucky few. As soon as it was known that there was a part of the world where a lieutenant-colonel had one morning received, as a present, an estate as large as that of the Earl of Bath or the Marquis of Rockingham, and where it seemed that such a trifle as ten or twenty thousand pounds was to be had by any British functionary for the asking, society began to exhibit all the symptoms of the South Sea year—a feverish excitement, an ungovernable impatience to be rich, a contempt for slow, sure, and moderate gains.

At the head of the preponderating party in the India House, had long stood a powerful, able, and ambitious director of the name of Sullivan. He had conceived a strong jealousy of Clive, and remembered with bitterness the audacity with which the late governor of Bengal had repeatedly set at nought the authority of the distant directors of the company. An apparent reconciliation took place after Clive's arrival; but enmity remained deeply rooted in the hearts of both. The whole body of directors was then chosen annually. At the election of 1763, Clive attempted to break down the power of the dominant faction. The contest was carried on with a violence which he describes as tremendous. Sullivan was victorious, and hastened to take his revenge. The grant of rent which Clive had received from Meer Jaffier was, in the opinion of the best English lawyers, valid. It had been made by exactly the same authority from which the company had received their chief possessions in Bengal, and the company had long acquiesced in it. The directors, however, most unjustly determined to confiscate it, and Clive was forced to file a bill in chancery against them.

But a great and sudden turn in affairs was at hand. Every ship from Bengal had for some time brought alarming tidings. The internal misgovernment of the province had reached such a point that

it could go no further. What, indeed, was to be expected from a body of public servants exposed to temptation such that, as Clive once said, flesh and blood could not bear it;—armed with irresistible power, and responsible only to the corrupt, turbulent, distracted, ill-informed company, situated at such a distance, that the average interval between the sending of a despatch and the receipt of an answer was above a year and a half? Accordingly, during the five years which followed the departure of Clive from Bengal, the misgovernment of the English was carried to a point such as seems hardly compatible with the very existence of society. The Roman proconsul, who, in a year or two, squeezed out of a province the means of rearing marble palaces and baths on the shores of Campania, of drinking from amber, of feasting on singing birds, of exhibiting armies of gladiators and flocks of caméléons—the Spanish viceroy, who, leaving behind him the curses of Mexico or Lima, entered Madrid with a long train of gilded coaches, and of sumpter-horses trapped and shod with silver—were now outdone. Cruelty, indeed, properly so called, was not among the vices of the servants of the company. But cruelty itself could hardly have produced greater evils than were the effect of their unprincipled eagerness to be rich. They pulled down their creature, Meer Jaffier. They set up in his place another nabob, named Meer Cossim. But Meer Cossim had talents and a will; and, though sufficiently inclined to oppress his subjects himself, he could not bear to see them ground to the dust by oppressions which yielded him no profit—nay, which destroyed his revenue in its very source. The English accordingly pulled down Meer Cossim, and set up Meer Jaffier again; and Meer Cossim, after revenging himself by a massacre surpassing in atrocity that of the Black Hole, fled to the dominions of the nabob of Oude. At every one of these revolutions, the new prince divided among his foreign masters whatever could be scraped together from the treasury of his fallen predecessor. The immense population of his dominions was given up as a prey to those who had made him a sovereign, and who could unmake him. The servants of the company obtained—not for their employers, but for themselves—a monopoly of almost the whole internal trade. They forced the natives to buy dear and sell cheap. They insulted with perfect impunity the tribunals, the police, and the fiscal authorities of the country. They covered with their protection a set of native dependents, who ranged through the provinces, spreading desolation and terror wherever they appeared. Every servant of a British factor was armed with all the power of his master, and his master was armed with all the power of the company. Enormous fortunes were thus rapidly accumulated at Calcutta, while thirty millions of human beings were reduced to the last extremity of wretchedness. They had been accustomed to live under tyranny, but never under tyranny like this. They found the little finger of the company thicker than the loins of Surajah Dowlah. Under their old masters they had at least one resource:—when the evil became insupportable, they rose and pulled down the government. But the English government was not to be so shaken off. That government, oppressive as the most oppressive form of barbarian despotism, was strong with all the strength of civilisa-

tion. It resembled the government of evil genii, rather than the government of human tyrants. Even despair could not inspire the soft Bengalee with courage to confront men of English breed—the hereditary nobility of mankind, whose skill and valour had so often triumphed in spite of tenfold odds. The unhappy race never attempted resistance. Sometimes they submitted in patient misery. Sometimes they fled from the white man, as their fathers had been used to fly from the Mahratta; and the palanquin of the English traveller was often carried through silent villages and towns, which the report of his approach had made desolate.

The foreign lords of Bengal were naturally objects of hatred to all the neighbouring powers; and, to all, the haughty race presented a dauntless front. Their armies, every where outnumbered, were every where victorious. A succession of commanders, formed in the school of Clive, still maintained the fame of their country. "It must be acknowledged," says the Mussulman historian of those times, "that this nation's presence of mind, firmness of temper, and undaunted bravery, are past all question. They join the most resolute courage to the most cautious prudence; nor have they their equals in the art of ranging themselves in battle array and fighting in order. If to so many military qualifications they knew how to join the arts of government—if they exerted as much ingenuity and solicitude in relieving the people of God, as they do in whatever concerns their military affairs, no nation in the world would be preferable to them, or worthier of command; but the people under their dominion groan every where, and are reduced to poverty and distress. Oh God! come to the assistance of thine afflicted servants, and deliver them from the oppressions they suffer."

It was impossible, however, that even the military establishment should long continue exempt from the vices which pervaded every other part of the government. Rapacity, luxury, and the spirit of insubordination, spread from the civil service to the officers of the army, and from the officers to the soldiers. The evil continued to grow till every mess-room became the seat of conspiracy and cabal, and till the sepoys could be kept in order only by wholesale executions.

At length the state of things in Bengal began to excite uneasiness at home. A succession of revolutions; a disorganised administration; the natives pillaged, yet the company not enriched; every fleet bringing back individuals able to purchase manors and to build stately dwellings, yet bringing back also alarming accounts of the financial prospects of the government; war on the frontiers, disaffection in the army, the national character disgraced by excesses resembling those of Verres and Pizarro; such was the spectacle which dismayed those who were conversant with Indian affairs. The general cry was, that Clive, and Clive alone, could save the empire which he had founded.

This feeling manifested itself in the strongest manner at a very full general court of proprietors. Men of all parties, forgetting their feuds, and trembling for their dividends, exclaimed that Clive was the man whom the crisis required;—that the oppressive proceedings which had been adopted respecting his estate ought to be dropped, and that he ought to be entreated to return to India.

Clive rose. As to his estate, he said, he would make such propositions to the directors as would, he trusted, lead to an amicable settlement. But there was a still greater difficulty. It was proper to tell them, that he never would undertake the government of Bengal, while his enemy, Sullivan, was chairman of the company. The tumult was violent. Sullivan could scarcely obtain a hearing. An overwhelming majority of the assembly was on Clive's side. Sullivan wished to try the result of a ballot. But, by the by-laws of the company, there can be no ballot except on a requisition signed by nine proprietors; and, though hundreds were present, nine persons could not be found to set their hands to such a requisition.

Clive was in consequence nominated governor and commander-in-chief of the British possessions in Bengal. But he adhered to his declaration, and refused to enter on his office till the event of the next election of directors should be known. The contest was obstinate, but Clive triumphed. Sullivan, lately absolute master of the India House, was within a vote of losing his own seat; and both the chairman and the deputy-chairman were friends of the new governor.

Such were the circumstances under which Lord Clive sailed for the third and last time to India. In May, 1765, he reached Calcutta, and he found the whole machine of government more fearfully disorganised than he had anticipated. Meer Jaffier, who had some time before lost his eldest son Meeran, had died while Clive was on his voyage out. The English functionaries at Calcutta had already received from home strict orders not to accept presents from the native princes. But, eager for gain, and unaccustomed to respect the commands of their distant, ignorant, and negligent masters, they again set up the throne of Bengal to sale. About one hundred and forty thousand pounds sterling were distributed among nine of the most powerful servants of the company; and, in consideration of this bribe, an infant son of the deceased nabob was placed on the seat of his father. The news of the ignominious bargain met Clive on his arrival. In a private letter, written immediately after to an intimate friend, he poured out his feelings in language which, proceeding from a man so daring, so resolute, and so little given to theatrical display of sentiment, seems to us singularly touching. "Alas!" he says, "how is the English name sunk! I could not avoid paying the tribute of a few tears to the departed and lost fame of the British nation—irrecoverably so, I fear. However, I do declare, by that great Being who is the searcher of all hearts, and to whom we must be accountable if there be an hereafter, that I am come out with a mind superior to all corruption, and that I am determined to destroy those great and growing evils, or perish in the attempt."

The council met, and Clive stated to them his full determination to effect a thorough reform, and to use for that purpose the whole of the ample authority, civil and military, which had been confided to him. Johnstone, one of the boldest and worst men in the assembly, made some show of opposition. Clive interrupted him, and haughtily demanded whether he meant to question the power of the new government. Johnstone was cowed, and disclaimed any such intention. All the faces round the board grew

long and pale; and not another syllable of dissent was uttered.

Clive redeemed his pledge. He remained in India about a year and a half; and in that short time effected one of the most extensive, difficult, and salutary reforms that ever was accomplished by any statesman. This was the part of his life on which he afterwards looked back with most pride. He had it in his power to triple his already splendid fortune; to connive at abuses while pretending to remove them, to conciliate the goodwill of all the English in Bengal, by giving up to their rapacity a helpless and timid race, who knew not where lay the island which sent forth their oppressors; and whose complaints had little chance of being heard across fifteen thousand miles of ocean. He knew that, if he applied himself in earnest to the work of reformation, he should raise every bad passion in arms against him. He knew how unscrupulous, how implacable, would be the hatred of those ravenous adventurers, who, having counted on accumulating in a few months fortunes sufficient to support peerages, should find all their hopes frustrated. But he had chosen the good part; and he called up all the force of his mind for a battle far harder than that of Plassey. At first success seemed hopeless; but very soon all obstacles began to bend before that iron courage and that vehement will. The receiving of presents from the natives was rigidly prohibited. The private trade of the servants of the company was put down. The whole settlement seemed to be set, as one man, against these measures. But the inexorable governor declared that, if he could not find support at Fort William, he would procure it elsewhere; and sent for some civil servants from Madras to assist him in carrying on the administration. The most factious of his opponents he turned out of their offices. The rest submitted to what was inevitable; and in a very short time all resistance was quelled.

But Clive was far too wise a man not to see that the recent abuses were partly to be ascribed to a cause which could not fail to produce similar abuses as soon as the pressure of his strong hand was withdrawn. The company had followed a mistaken policy with respect to the remuneration of its servants. The salaries were too low to afford even those indulgences which are necessary to the health and comfort of Europeans in a tropical climate. To lay by a rupee from such scanty pay was impossible. It could not be supposed that men of even average abilities would consent to pass the best years of life in exile, under a burning sun, for no other consideration than these stinted wages. It had accordingly been understood, from a very early period, that the company's agents were at liberty to enrich themselves by their private trade. This practice had been seriously injurious to the commercial interests of the corporation. That very intelligent observer, Sir Thomas Roe, in the reign of James the First, strongly urged the directors to apply a remedy to the abuse. "Absolutely prohibit the private trade," said he, "for your business will be better done. I know this is harsh. Men profess they come not for bare wages. But you will take away this plea if you give great wages to their content; and then you know what you part from."

In spite of this excellent advice, the company adhered to the old system, paid low salaries, and con-

nived at the by-gains of its servants. The pay of a member of council was only three hundred pounds a year. Yet it was notorious that such a functionary could hardly live in India for less than ten times that sum; and it could not be expected that he would be content to live even handsomely in India without laying up something against the time of his return to England. This system, before the conquest of Bengal, might affect the amount of the dividends payable to the proprietors, but could do little harm in any other way. But the company was now a ruling body. Its servants might still be called factors, junior merchants, senior merchants. But they were in truth proconsuls, propraetors, procurators of extensive regions. They had immense power. Their regular pay was universally admitted to be insufficient. They were, by the ancient usage of the service, and by the implied permission of their employers, warrantied in enriching themselves by indirect means; and this had been the origin of the frightful oppression and corruption which had desolated Bengal. Clive saw clearly that it was absurd to give men power, and to expect that they would be content to live in penury. He justly concluded, that no reform could be effectual which should not be coupled with a plan for liberally remunerating the civil servants of the company. The directors, he knew, were not disposed to sanction any increase of the salaries out of their own treasury. The only course which remained open to the governor was one which exposed him to much misrepresentation, but which we think him fully justified in adopting. He appropriated to the support of the service the monopoly of salt, which has formed, down to our own time, a principal head of Indian revenue; and he divided the proceeds according to a scale which seems to have been not unreasonably fixed. He was in consequence accused by his enemies, and has been accused by historians, of disobeying his instructions—of violating his promises—of authorising that very abuse which it was his especial mission to destroy, namely, the trade of the company's servants. But every discerning and impartial judge will admit, that there was really nothing in common between the system which he set up and that which he was sent to destroy. The monopoly of salt had been a source of revenue to the governments of India before Clive was born. It continued to be so long after his death. The civil servants were clearly entitled to a maintenance out of the revenue, and all that Clive did was to charge a particular portion of the revenue with their maintenance. He thus, while he put an end to the practices by which gigantic fortunes had been rapidly accumulated, gave to every British functionary employed in the East the means of slowly, but surely, acquiring a competence. Yet, such is the injustice of mankind, that none of those acts which are the real taints of his life, has drawn on him so much obloquy as this measure, which was in truth a reform necessary to the success of all his other reforms.

He had quelled the opposition of the civil service: that of the army was more formidable. Some of the retrenchments which had been ordered by the directors affected the interests of the military service; and a storm arose, such as even Cæsar would not willingly have faced. It was no light thing to encounter the resistance of those who held the power

of the sword, in a country governed only by the sword. Two hundred English officers engaged in a conspiracy against the government, and determined to resign their commissions on the same day, not doubting that Clive would grant any terms rather than see the army, on which alone the British empire in the East rested, left without commanders. They little knew the unconquerable spirit with which they had to deal. Clive had still a few officers round his person on whom he could rely. He sent to Fort St. George for a fresh supply. He gave commissions even to mercantile agents who were disposed to support him at this crisis; and he sent orders that every officer who resigned should be instantly brought up to Calcutta. The conspirators found that they had miscalculated. The governor was inexorable. The troops were steady. The sepoys, over whom Clive had always possessed extraordinary influence, stood by him with unshaken fidelity. The leaders in the plot were arrested, tried, and cashiered. The rest, humbled and dispirited, begged to be permitted to withdraw their resignations. Many of them declared their repentance even with tears. The younger offenders Clive treated with lenity. To the ringleaders he was inflexibly severe; but his severity was pure from all taint of private malevolence. While he sternly upheld the just authority of his office, he passed by personal insults and injuries with magnanimous disdain. One of the conspirators was accused of having planned the assassination of the governor; but Clive would not listen to the charge. "The officers," he said, "are Englishmen, not assassins."

While he reformed the civil service and established his authority over the army, he was equally successful in his foreign policy. His landing on Indian ground was the signal for immediate peace. The nabob of Oude, with a large army, lay at that time on the frontier of Bahar. He had been joined by many Afghans and Mahrattas, and there was no small reason to expect a general coalition of all the native powers against the English. But the name of Clive quelled in an instant all opposition. The enemy implored peace in the humblest language, and submitted to such terms as the new governor chose to dictate.

At the same time, the government of Bengal was placed on a new footing. The power of the English in that province had hitherto been altogether undefined. It was unknown to the ancient constitution of the empire, and it had been ascertained by no compact. It resembled the power which, in the last decrepitude of the western empire, was exercised over Italy by the great chiefs of foreign mercenaries, the Ricimers and the Odoacers, who put up and pulled down at their pleasure a succession of insignificant princes, dignified with the names of Cæsar and Augustus. But as in the one case, so in the other, the warlike strangers at length found it expedient to give to a domination which had been established by arms alone, the sanction of law and ancient prescription. Theodorice thought it politic to obtain from the distant court of Byzantium a commission appointing him ruler of Italy; and Clive, in the same manner, applied to the court of Delhi for a formal grant of the powers of which he already possessed the reality. The Mogul was absolutely helpless; and, though he murmured, had reason to



be well pleased that the English were disposed to give solid rupees, which he never could have extorted from them, in exchange for a few Persian characters which cost him nothing. A bargain was speedily struck; and the titular sovereign of Hindostan issued a warrant, empowering the company to collect and administer the revenues of Bengal, Orissa and Bahar.

There was still a nabob, who stood to the British authorities in the same relation in which the last drivelling Chilperics and Childerics of the Merovingian line stood to their able and vigorous mayors of the palace—to Charles Martel and to Pepin. At one time Clive had almost made up his mind to discard this phantom altogether; but he afterwards thought that it might be convenient still to use the name of the nabob, particularly in dealings with other European nations. The French, the Dutch, and the Danes, would, he conceived, submit far more readily to the authority of the native prince, whom they had always been accustomed to respect, than to that of a rival trading corporation. This policy may, at that time, have been judicious. But the pretence was soon found to be too flimsy to impose on any body; and it was altogether laid aside. The heir of Meer Jaffier still resides at Moorsshedabad, the ancient capital of his house, still bears the title of nabob, is still accosted by the English as "Your Highness," and is still suffered to retain a portion of the regal state which surrounded his ancestors. A pension of a hundred and sixty thousand pounds a year is annually paid to him by the government. His carriage is surrounded by guards, and preceded by attendants with silver maces. His person and his dwelling are exempted from the ordinary authority of the ministers of justice. But he has not the smallest share of political power, and is, in fact, only a noble and wealthy subject of the company.

It would have been easy for Clive, during his second administration in Bengal, to accumulate riches such as no subject in Europe possessed. He might indeed, without subjecting the rich inhabitants of the province to any pressure beyond that to which their mildest rulers had accustomed them, have received presents to the amount of three hundred thousand pounds a year. The neighbouring princes would gladly have paid any price for his favour. But he appears to have strictly adhered to the rule which he had laid down for the guidance of others. The prince of Benares offered him diamonds of great value. The nabob of Oude pressed him to accept a large sum of money, and a casket of costly jewels. Clive courteously, but peremptorily refused; and it deserves notice that he made no merit of his refusal, and that the facts did not come to light till after his death. He kept an exact account of his salary, of his share of the profits accruing from the trade in salt, and of those presents which, according to the fashion of the East, it would be churlish to refuse. Out of the sum arising from these resources, he defrayed the expenses of his situation. The surplus he divided among a few attached friends who had accompanied him to India. He always boasted, and as far as we can judge he boasted with truth, that his last administration diminished instead of increasing his fortune.

One large sum indeed he accepted. Meer Jaffier had left him by will above sixty thousand pounds

sterling, in specie and jewels: and the rules which had been recently laid down extended only to presents from the living, and did not affect legacies from the dead. Clive took the money, but not for himself. He made the whole over to the company, in trust for officers and soldiers invalided in their service. The fund, which still bears his name, owes its origin to this princely donation.

After a stay of eighteen months, the state of his health rendered it necessary for him to return to Europe. At the close of January, 1767, he quitted for the last time the country on whose destinies he had exercised so mighty an influence.

His second return from Bengal was not, like his first, greeted by the acclamations of his countrymen. Numerous causes were already at work which embittered the remaining years of his life, and hurried him to an untimely grave. His old enemies at the India House were still powerful and active; and they had been reinforced by a large band of allies, whose violence far exceeded their own. The whole crew of pilferers and oppressors from whom he had rescued Bengal, persecuted him with the implacable rancour which belongs to such abject natures. Many of them even invested their property in India stock, merely that they might be better able to annoy the man whose firmness had set bounds to their rapacity. Lying newspapers were set up for no purpose but to abuse him; and the temper of the public mind was then such, that these arts, which, under ordinary circumstances, would have been ineffectual against truth and merit, produced an extraordinary impression.

The great events which had taken place in India had called into existence a new class of Englishmen, to whom their countrymen gave the name of nabobs. These persons had generally sprung from families neither ancient nor opulent; they had generally been sent at an early age to the East; and they had there acquired large fortunes, which they had brought back to their native land. It was natural that, not having had much opportunity of mixing with the best society, they should exhibit some of the awkwardness and some of the pomposity of upstarts. It was natural that, during their sojourn in Asia, they should have acquired some tastes and habits surprising, if not disgusting, to persons who never had quitted Europe. It was natural that, having enjoyed great consideration in the East, they should not be disposed to sink into obscurity at home; and as they had money, and had not birth or high connection, it was natural that they should display a little obtrusively the advantage which they possessed. Wherever they settled there was a kind of feud between them and the old nobility and gentry, similar to that which raged in France between the farmer-general and the marquis. This enmity to the aristocracy long continued to distinguish the servants of the company. More than twenty years after the time of which we are now speaking, Burke pronounced, that among the Jacobins might be reckoned "the East Indians almost to a man, who cannot bear to find that their present importance does not bear a proportion to their wealth."

The nabobs soon became a most unpopular class of men. Some of them had in the East displayed eminent talents, and rendered great services to the state; but at home their talents were not shown to

advantage, and their services were little known. That they had sprung from obscurity, that they had acquired great wealth, that they exhibited it insolently, that they spent it extravagantly, that they raised the price of every thing in their neighbourhood, from fresh eggs to rotten boroughs; that their liveries outshone those of dukes, that their coaches were finer than that of the lord mayor, that the examples of their large and ill-governed households corrupted half the servants in the country; that some of them, with all their magnificence, could not catch the tone of good society, but, in spite of the stud and the crowd of menials, of the plate and the Dresden china, of the venison and the Burgundy, were still low men;—these were things which excited, both in the class from which they had sprung, and in that into which they attempted to force themselves, the bitter aversion which is the effect of mingled envy and contempt. But when it was also rumoured that the fortune which had enabled its possessor to eclipse the lord-lieutenant on the race-ground, or to carry the county against the head of a house as old as “*Domesday Book*,” had been accumulated by violating public faith—by deposing legitimate princes, by reducing whole provinces to beggary—all the higher and better, as well as all the low and evil parts of human nature, were stirred against the wretch who had obtained, by guilt and dishonour, the riches which he now lavished with arrogant and inelegant profusion. The unfortunate nabob seemed to be made up of those foibles against which comedy has pointed the most merciless ridicule, and of those crimes which have thrown the deepest gloom over tragedy—of Turcaret and Nero, of Monsieur Jourdain and Richard the Third. A tempest of execration and derision, such as can be compared only to that outbreak of public feeling against the puritans which took place at the time of the restoration, burst on the servants of the company. The humane man was horror-struck at the way in which they had got their money, the thrifty man at the way in which they spent it. The dilettante sneered at their want of taste. The macaroni black-balled them as vulgar fellows. Writers the most unlike in sentiment and style—methodists and libertines, philosophers and buffoons—were for once on the same side. It is hardly too much to say, that, during a space of about thirty years, the whole lighter literature of England was coloured by the feelings which we have described. Foote brought on the stage an Anglo-Indian chief, dissolute, ungenerous, and tyrannical, ashamed of the humble friends of his youth, hating the aristocracy, yet childishly eager to be numbered among them, squandering his wealth on panders and flatterers, tricking out his chairmen with the most costly hot-house flowers, and astounding the ignorant with jargon about rupees, laces, and jaghires. Mackenzie, with more delicate humour, depicted a plain country family raised by the Indian acquisitions of one of its members to sudden opulence, and exciting derision by an awkward mimicry of the manners of the great. Cowper, in that lofty expostulation which glows with the very spirit of the Hebrew poets, placed the oppression of India foremost in the list of those national crimes for which God had punished England with years of disastrous war, with discomfiture in her own seas, and with the loss of her trans-

atlantic empire. If any of our readers will take the trouble to search in the dusty recesses of circulating libraries for some novel published sixty years ago, the chance is that the villain or sub-villain of the story will prove to be a savage old nabob, with an immense fortune, a tawny complexion, a bad liver, and a worse heart.

Such, as far as we can now judge, was the feeling of the country respecting nabobs in general. And Clive was eminently the nabob—the ablest, the most celebrated, the highest in rank, the highest in fortune, of all the fraternity. His wealth was exhibited in a manner which could not fail to excite odium. He lived with great magnificence in Berkeley Square. He reared one palace in Shropshire, and another at Claremont. His parliamentary influence might vie with that of the greatest families. But in all his splendour and power, envy found something to sneer at. On some of his relations, wealth and dignity seem to have sate as awkwardly as on Mackenzie’s “*Margery Mushroom*.” Nor was he himself, with all his great qualities, free from those weaknesses which the satirists of that age represented as characteristic of his whole class. In the field, indeed, his habits were remarkably simple. He was constantly on horseback, was never seen but in his uniform, never wore silk, never entered a palanquin, and was content with the plainest fare. But when he was no longer at the head of the army, he laid aside this Spartan temperance for the ostentatious luxury of a Sybarite. Though his person was ungraceful, and though his harsh features were redeemed from vulgar ugliness only by their stern, dauntless, and commanding expression, he was fond of rich and gay clothing, and replenished his wardrobe with absurd profusion. Sir John Malcolm gives us a letter worthy of Sir Matthew Mite, in which Clive orders “two hundred shirts, the best and finest that can be got for love or money.” A few follies of this description, grossly exaggerated by report, produced an unfavourable impression on the public mind. But this was not the worst. Black stories, of which the greater part were pure inventions, were circulated respecting his conduct in the East. He had to bear the whole odium, not only of those bad acts to which he had once or twice stooped, but of all the bad acts of all the English in India—of bad acts committed when he was absent—nay, of bad acts which he had manfully opposed and severely punished. The very abuses against which he had waged an honest, resolute, and successful war, were laid to his account. He was, in fact, regarded as the personification of all the vices and weaknesses which the public, with or without reason, ascribed to the English adventurers in Asia. We have ourselves heard old men, who knew nothing of his history, but who still retained the prejudices conceived in their youth, talk of him as an incarnate fiend. Johnson always held this language. Brown, whom Clive employed to lay out his pleasure grounds, was amazed to see in the house of his employer a chest which had once been filled with gold from the treasury of Moorshe-dabad; and could not understand how the conscience of the criminal could suffer him to sleep with such an object so near to his bedchamber. The peasantry of Surrey looked with mysterious horror on the stately house which was rising at Claremont, and whispered that the great wicked lord had ordered

the walls to be made so thick in order to keep out the devil, who would one day carry him away bodily. Among the gaping clowns who drank in this frightful story, was a worthless ugly lad of the name of Hunter, since widely known as William Huntingdon, S.S.; and the superstition which was strangely mingled with the knavery of that remarkable impostor, seems to have derived no small nutriment from the tales which he heard of the life and character of Clive.\*

In the mean time, the impulse which Clive had given to the administration of Bengal, was constantly becoming fainter and fainter. His policy was to a great extent abandoned; the abuses which he had suppressed began to revive; and at length the evils which a bad government had engendered, were aggravated by one of those fearful visitations which the best government cannot avert. In the summer of 1770, the rains failed; the earth was parched up; the tanks were empty; the rivers shrank within their beds; a famine, such as is known only in countries where every household depends for support on its own little patch of cultivation, filled the whole valley of the Ganges with misery and death. Tender and delicate women, whose veils had never been lifted before the public gaze, came forth from the inner chambers in which Eastern jealousy had kept watch over their beauty, threw themselves on the earth before the passers by, and, with loud wailings, implored a handful of rice for their children. The Hoogley every day rolled down thousands of corpses close by the porticoes and gardens of the English conquerors. The very streets of Calcutta were blocked up by the dying and the dead. The lean and feeble survivors had not energy enough to bear the bodies of their kindred to the funeral pile or to the holy river, or even to scare away the jackals and vultures, who fed on human remains in the face of day. The extent of the mortality was never ascertained, but it was popularly reckoned by millions. This melancholy intelligence added to the excitement which already prevailed in England on Indian subjects. The proprietors of East India stock were uneasy about their dividends. All men of common humanity were touched by the calamities of our unhappy subjects, and indignation soon began to mingle itself with pity. It was rumoured that the company's servants had created the famine by engrossing all the rice of the country; that they had sold grain for eight, ten, twelve times the price at which they had bought it; that one English functionary, who, the year before, was not worth a hundred guineas, had, during that season of misery, remitted sixty thousand pounds to London. These charges we believe to have been utterly unfounded. That servants of the company had ventured, since Clive's departure, to deal in rice, is probable. That, if they dealt in rice, they must have gained by the scarcity, is certain. But there is no reason for thinking that they either produced or aggravated an evil which physical causes sufficiently explain. The outcry which was raised against them on this occasion was, we suspect, as absurd as the imputation which, in times of dearth at home, were once thrown by statesmen and judges, and are still thrown by two or three old women, on the corn-factors. It was, however, so loud and so general, that it appears to have imposed even on an intellect raised so high above vulgar prejudices as that of Adam Smith.† What was still more extraordinary, these unhappy events greatly increased the unpopularity of Lord Clive. He had been some years in England when the famine took place. None of his measures had the smallest tendency to produce such a

calamity. If the servants of the company had traded in rice, they had done so in direct contravention of the rule which he had laid down, and, while in power, had resolutely enforced. But, in the eyes of his countrymen, he was, as we have said, the nabob—the Anglo-Indian character personified; and, while he was building and planting in Surrey, he was held responsible for all the effects of a dry season in Bengal.

Parliament had hitherto bestowed very little attention on our eastern possessions. Since the death of George the Second, a rapid succession of weak administrations, each of which was in turn flattered and betrayed by the court, had held the semblance of power. Intrigues in the palace, riots in the city, and insurrectionary movements in the American colonies, had left them little leisure to study Indian politics. Where they did interfere, their interference was feeble and irresolute. Lord Chatham, indeed, during the short period of his ascendancy in the councils of George the Third, had meditated a bold and sweeping measure, respecting the acquisitions of the company. But his plans were rendered abortive by the strange malady which about that time began to overcloud his splendid genius.

At length, in 1772, it was generally felt that parliament could no longer neglect the affairs of India. The government was stronger than any which had held power since the breach between Mr. Pitt and the great whig connection in 1761. No pressing question of domestic or European policy required the attention of public men. There was a short and delusive lull between two tempests. The excitement produced by the Middlesex election was over; the discontents of America did not yet threaten civil war; the financial difficulties of the company brought on a crisis; the ministers were forced to take up the subject; and the whole storm, which had long been gathering, now broke at once on the head of Clive.

His situation was indeed singularly unfortunate. He was hated throughout the country, hated at the India House, hated, above all, by those wealthy and powerful servants of the company, whose rapacity and tyranny he had withstood. He had to bear the double odium of his bad and of his good actions—of every Indian abuse, and of every Indian reform. The state of the political world was such, that he could count on the support of no powerful connection. The party to which he had belonged, that of George Grenville, had been hostile to the government, and yet had never cordially united with the other sections of the opposition—with the little band who still followed the fortunes of Lord Chatham, or with the large and respectable body of which Lord Rockingham was the acknowledged leader. George Grenville was now dead: his followers were scattered; and Clive, unconnected with any of the powerful factions which divided the parliament, could reckon only on the votes of those members who were returned by himself. His enemies, particularly those who were the enemies of his virtues, were unscrupulous, ferocious, implacable. Their malevolence aimed at nothing less than the utter ruin of his fame and fortune. They wished to see him expelled from parliament, to see his spurs chopped off, to see his estate confiscated; and it may be doubted whether even such a result as this would have quenched their thirst for revenge.

Clive's parliamentary tactics resembled his military tactics. Deserted, surrounded, outnumbered, and with every thing at stake, he did not even deign to stand on the defensive, but pushed boldly forward to the attack. At an early stage of the discussions on Indian affairs, he rose, and in a long and elaborate speech, vindicated himself from a large part of the accusations which had been brought against him. He is said to have produced a great impression on his audience. Lord Chatham, who, now the ghost of his former self, loved to haunt the scene

\* See Huntingdon's *Kingdom of Heaven taken by Prayer*, and his Letters.

† *Wealth of Nations*, Book IV. Chap. v.—Digression.



of his glory, was that night under the gallery of the house of commons, and declared that he had never heard a finer speech. It was subsequently printed under Clive's direction, and must be allowed to exhibit, not merely strong sense and a manly spirit, but talents both for disquisition and declamation, which assiduous culture might have improved into the highest excellence. He confined his defence on this occasion to the measures of his last administration; and succeeded so far, that his enemies thenceforth thought it expedient to direct their attacks chiefly against the earlier part of his life.

The earlier part of his life unfortunately presented some assailable points to their hostility. A committee was chosen by ballot, to inquire into the affairs of India; and by this committee the whole history of that great revolution which threw down Surajah Dowlah, and raised Meer Jaffier, was sifted with malignant care. Clive was subjected to the most unsparing examination and cross-examination, and afterwards bitterly complained that he, the Baron of Plassey, had been treated like a sheep-stealer. The boldness and ingenuousness of his replies, would alone suffice to show how alien from his nature were the frauds to which, in the course of his eastern negotiations, he had sometimes descended. He avowed the arts which he had employed to deceive Omichund; and resolutely said that he was not ashamed of them, and that, in the same circumstances, he would again act in the same manner. He admitted that he had received immense sums from Meer Jaffier; but he denied that, in doing so, he had violated any obligation of morality or honour. He laid claim, on the contrary, and not without some reason, to the praise of eminent disinterestedness. He described in vivid language the situation in which his victory had placed him;—a great prince dependent on his pleasure; an opulent city afraid of being given up to plunder; wealthy bankers bidding against each other for his smiles; vaults piled with gold and jewels thrown open to him alone. "By God, Mr. Chairman," he exclaimed, "at this moment I stand astonished at my own moderation."

The inquiry was so extensive that the houses rose before it had been completed. It was continued in the following session. When at length the committee had concluded its labours, enlightened and impartial men had little difficulty in making up their minds as to the result. It was clear that Clive had been guilty of some acts which it is impossible to vindicate without attacking the authority of all the most sacred laws which regulate the intercourse of individuals and of states. But it was equally clear that he had displayed great talents, and even great virtues; that he had rendered eminent services both to his country and to the people of India; and that it was in truth not for his dealings with Meer Jaffier, nor for the fraud which he had practised on Omichund, but for his determined resistance to avarice and tyranny, that he was now called in question.

Ordinary criminal justice knows nothing of set-off. The greatest desert cannot be pleaded in answer to a charge of the slightest transgression. If a man has sold beer on Sunday morning, it is no defence that he has saved the life of a fellow-creature at the risk of his own. If he has harnessed a Newfoundland dog to his little child's carriage, it is no defence that he was wounded at Waterloo. But it is not in this way that we ought to deal with men who, raised far above ordinary restraints, and tried by far more than ordinary temptations, are entitled to a more than ordinary measure of indulgence. Such men should be judged by their contemporaries as they will be judged by posterity. Their bad actions ought not, indeed, to be called good; but their good and bad actions ought to be fairly weighed:—and if on the whole the good preponderate, the sentence ought to be one, not merely of acquittal but of approbation. Not a single

great ruler in history can be absolved by a judge who fixes his eye inexorably on one or two unjustifiable acts. Bruce the deliverer of Scotland, Maurice the deliverer of Germany, William the deliverer of Holland, his great descendant the deliverer of England, Murray the good regent, Cosmo the father of his country, Henry IV. of France, Peter the Great of Russia—how would the best of them pass such a scrutiny? History takes wider views; and the best tribunal for great political cases is that tribunal which anticipates the verdict of history.

Reasonable and moderate men of all parties felt this in Clive's case. They could not pronounce him blameworthy; but they were not disposed to abandon him to that low-minded and rancorous pack who had run him down, and were eager to worry him to death. Lord North, though not very friendly to him, was not disposed to go to extremities against him. While the inquiry was still in progress, Clive, who had some years before been created a knight of the bath, was installed with great pomp in Henry the Seventh's chapel. He was soon after appointed lord-lieutenant of Shropshire. When he kissed hands, George III., who had always been partial to him, admitted him to a private audience, talked to him half an hour on Indian politics, and was visibly affected when the persecuted general spoke of his services, and of the way in which they had been requited.

At length the charges came in a definite form before the house of commons. Burgoyne, chairman of the committee, a man of wit, fashion, and honour, an agreeable dramatic writer, an officer whose courage was never questioned, and whose skill was at that time highly esteemed, appeared as the accuser. The members of the administration took different sides; for in that age all questions were open questions except such as were brought forward by the government, or such as implied some censure on the government. Thurlow, the attorney general, was among the assailants. Wedderburne, the solicitor general, strongly attached to Clive, defended his friend with extraordinary force of argument and language. It is a curious circumstance, that some years later, Thurlow was the most conspicuous champion of Warren Hastings, while Wedderburne was among the most unrelenting persecutors of that great, though not faultless statesman. Clive spoke in his own defence at less length and with less art than in the preceding year, but with great energy and pathos. He recounted his great actions and his wrongs; and, after bidding his hearers remember that they were about to decide, not only on his honour but on their own, he retired from the house.

The commons resolved that acquisitions made by the arms of the state belong to the state alone, and that it is illegal in the servants of the state to appropriate such acquisitions to themselves. They resolved that this wholesome rule appeared to have been systematically violated by the English functionaries in Bengal. On a subsequent day they went a step further, and resolved that Clive had, by means of the power which he possessed as commander of the British forces in India, obtained large sums from Meer Jaffier. Here the house stopped. They had voted the major and minor of Burgoyne's syllogism; but they shrunk from drawing the logical conclusion. When it was moved that Lord Clive had abused his powers, and set an evil example to the servants of the public, the previous question was put and carried. At length, long after the sun had risen on an animated debate, Wedderburne moved that Lord Clive had at the same time rendered great and meritorious services to his country; and this motion passed without a division.

The result of this memorable inquiry appears to us, on the whole, honourable to the justice, moderation, and discernment of the commons. They had indeed no great



temptation to do wrong. They would have been very bad judges of an accusation brought against Jenkinson or against Wilkes. But the question respecting Clive was not a party question; and the house accordingly acted with the good sense and good feeling which may always be expected from an assembly of English gentlemen, not blinded by faction.

The equitable and temperate proceedings of the British parliament were set off to the greatest advantage by a foil. The wretched government of Louis XV. had murdered, directly or indirectly, almost every Frenchman who had served his country with distinction in the East. Labourdonnais was flung into the Bastille, and, after years of suffering, left it only to die. Dupleix, stripped of his immense fortune, and broken-hearted by humiliating attendance in antechambers, sank into an obscure grave. Lally was dragged to the common place of execution with a gag between his lips. The commons of England, on the other hand, treated their living captain with that discriminating justice which is seldom shown except to the dead. They laid down sound general principles; they delicately pointed out where he had deviated from those principles; and they tempered the gentle censure with liberal eulogy. The contrast struck Voltaire, always partial to England, and always eager to expose the abuses of the parliaments of France. Indeed he seems, at this time, to have meditated a history of the conquest of Bengal. He mentioned his design to Dr. Moore when that amusing writer visited him at Ferney. Wedderburne took great interest in the matter, and pressed Clive to furnish materials. Had the plan been carried into execution, we have no doubt that Voltaire would have produced a book containing much lively and picturesque narrative, many just and humane sentiments poignantly expressed, many grotesque blunders, many sneers at the Mosaic chronology, much scandal about the Catholic missionaries, and much sublime *theophilanthropy* stolen from the New Testament, and put into the mouths of virtuous and philosophical Brahmins.

Clive was now secure in the enjoyment of his fortune and his honours. He was surrounded by attached friends and relations; and he had not yet passed the season of vigorous bodily and mental exertion. But clouds had long been gathering over his mind, and now settled on it in thick darkness. From early youth he had been subject to fits of that strange melancholy "which rejoiceth exceedingly and is glad when it can find the grave." While still a writer at Madras, he had twice attempted to destroy himself. Business and prosperity had produced a salutary effect on his spirits. In India, while he was occupied by great affairs, in England, while wealth and rank had still the charm of novelty, he had borne up against his constitutional misery. But he had now nothing to do, and nothing to wish for. His active spirit in an inactive situation drooped and withered like a plant in an uncongenial air. The malignity with which his enemies had pursued him, the indignity with which he had been treated by the committee, the censure, lenient as it was, which the house of commons had pronounced, the knowledge that he was regarded by a large portion of his countrymen as a cruel and perfidious tyrant, all concurred to irritate and depress him. In the mean time, his temper was tried by acute physical suffering. During his long residence in tropical climates, he had contracted several painful distempers. In order to obtain ease he called in the help of opium; and he was gradually enslaved by this treacherous ally. To the last, however, his genius occasionally flashed through the gloom. It was said that he would sometimes, after sitting silent and torpid for hours, rouse himself to the discussion of some great question, would display in full vigour all the talents of the soldier and the statesman, and would then sink back into his melancholy repose.

The disputes with America had now become so serious, that an appeal to the sword seemed inevitable; and the ministers were desirous to avail themselves of the services of Clive. Had he still been what he was when he raised the siege of Patna, and annihilated the Dutch army and navy at the mouth of the Ganges, it is not improbable that the resistance of the colonists would have been put down, and that the inevitable separation would have been deferred for a few years. But it was too late. His strong mind was fast sinking under many kinds of suffering. On the 22d of November, 1774, he died by his own hand. He had just completed his forty-ninth year.

In the awful close of so much prosperity and glory, the vulgar saw only a confirmation of all their prejudices; and some men of real piety and talents so far forgot the maxims both of religion and of philosophy, as confidently to ascribe the mournful event to the just vengeance of God, and the horrors of an evil conscience. It is with very different feelings that we contemplate the spectacle of a great mind ruined by the weariness of satiety, by the pangs of wounded honour, by fatal diseases, and more fatal remedies.

Clive committed great faults; and we have not attempted to disguise them. But his faults, when weighed against his merits, and viewed in connection with his temptations, do not appear to us to deprive him of his right to an honourable place in the estimation of posterity.

From his first visit to India dates the renown of the English arms in the East. Till he appeared, his countrymen were despised as mere pedlars, while the French were revered as a people formed for victory and command. His courage and capacity dissolved the charm. With the defence of Arcot commences that long series of oriental triumphs which closes with the fall of Ghazni. Nor must we forget that he was only twenty-five years old when he approved himself ripe for military command. This is a rare if not a singular distinction. It is true that Alexander, Conde, and Charles the Twelfth, won great battles at a still earlier age; but those princes were surrounded by veteran generals of distinguished skill, to whose suggestions must be attributed the victories of the Granicus, of Rocroi, and of Narva. Clive, an inexperienced youth, had yet more experience than any of those who served under him. He had to form himself, to form his officers, and to form his army. The only man, as far as we recollect, who at an equally early age ever gave equal proof of talents for war, was Napoleon Bonaparte.

From Clive's second visit to India dates the political ascendancy of the English in that country. His dexterity and resolution realised, in the course of a few months, more than all the gorgeous visions which had floated before the imagination of Dupleix. Such an extent of cultivated territory, such an amount of revenue, such a multitude of subjects, was never added to the dominion of Rome by the most successful proconsul. Nor were such wealthy spoils ever borne under arches of triumph, down the sacred way, and through the crowded forum, to the threshold of Tarpeian Jove. The fame of those who subdued Antiochus and Tigranes grows dim when compared with the splendour of the exploits which the young English adventurer achieved at the head of an army not equal in numbers to one-half of a Roman legion.

From Clive's third visit to India dates the purity of the administration of our eastern empire. When he landed at Calcutta in 1765, Bengal was regarded as a place to which Englishmen were sent only to get rich, by any means, in the shortest possible time. He first made dauntless and unsparing war on that gigantic system of oppression, extortion, and corruption. In that

war he manfully put to hazard his ease, his fame, and his splendid fortune. The same sense of justice which forbids us to conceal or extenuate the faults of his earlier days, compels us to admit that those faults were nobly repaired. If the reproach of the company and of its servants has been taken away—if in India the yoke of foreign masters, elsewhere the heaviest of all yokes, has been found lighter than that of any native dynasty—if to that gang of public robbers which once spread terror through the whole plain of Bengal, has succeeded a body of functionaries not more highly distinguished by ability and diligence than by integrity, disinterestedness, and public spirit—if we now see men like Munro, Elphinstone, and Metcalfe, after leading victorious armies, after making and deposing kings, return, proud of their honourable poverty, from a land which once held out to every greedy factor the hope of boundless wealth—the praise is in no small measure due to Clive. His name stands high on the roll of conquerors. But it is found in a better list—in the list of those who have done and suffered much for the happiness of mankind. To the warrior, history will assign a place in the same rank with Lucullus and Trajan. Nor will she deny to the reformer, a share of that veneration with which France cherishes the memory of Turgot, and with which the latest generations of Hindoos will contemplate the statue of Lord William Bentinck.

From the Foreign Quarterly Review.

*Reise des kaiserlich Russischen Flotten Lieutenants Ferdinand v. Wrangel, längs der Nordküste von Sibirien und auf dem Eismeere, in dem Jahren 1820 bis 1824.* (Survey of the North-eastern Coast of Siberia, by order of the Russian Government.) Berlin, 1839.

The publication of the work now before us has been unaccountably delayed for more than ten years, and appears at length in the form of a translation, while the original Russian manuscript is still allowed idly to repose in the archives of the admiralty at St. Petersburg. The distinguished author has in the mean time been advancing from the rank of lieutenant to that of admiral; his services, therefore, have been fully estimated by his government, a circumstance that makes the suppression of his attractive narrative the more surprising. The consequence has been, that though to the scientific world the name of Von Wrangel has long been advantageously known, through some fragmentary communications made by Professor Parrot, yet the public generally have hitherto remained in perfect ignorance of the meritorious and persevering exertions of the Russian seaman, to complete the geographical survey of the north of Asia. Our maps have long borne the corrections which the labours of our gallant author enabled him to effect; it is right that we should at length learn something of the personal sufferings and privations by which those labours were accompanied. Before proceeding, however, to an examination of Admiral von Wrangel's own expedition, we will place before our readers a brief abstract of the earlier discoveries made in Siberian geography.

The earliest discoveries of the Siberian coast were the Russian fur traders, whom, towards the middle of the 16th century, we find engaged in an active commerce with the population dwelling at the mouths of the Ob and Yenissei rivers. They seldom attempted to sail round the peninsula which divides the Gulf of Ob from the Carian sea, preferring to ascend the rivers of the one great maritime inlet, and, after drawing their light vessels over a small intervening tract, to descend again by the streams that pour their waters into the opposite bay.

From such navigators none but the most vague accounts could be expected of the regions they visited.

Early in the 17th century the Russian provincial governors appear to have taken a pride in sending small parties of Cossacks into the unexplored recesses of Siberia, for the purpose of imposing a tribute upon the wandering inhabitants, and annexing additional territories to the already vast empire of their sovereign. In most instances little or no resistance was offered to these conquering discoverers. Sometimes, however, the roving tribes that tended their herds on the frozen heaths of Northern Asia offered the most determined opposition to those who invited them to surrender their wild independence; sanguinary wars then ensued, attended by the same melancholy result which has ever followed the collision of ill-armed and uncivilised nations with the disciplined troops of European powers. Many warlike tribes, whom their discoverers found in the possession of numerous herds of reindeer, have all dwindled away to a few wretched fishermen scattered along the banks of the majestic rivers that flow in stately solitude through the icy soil of Northern Asia; while nations, of whom Siberian tradition still relates that "their fire hearths were once as numerous as the stars of heaven," have now been either absorbed by some of the neighbouring tribes, or have wholly vanished from the soil over which their ancestors once held unquestioned sway. Yet there is an evident solicitude on the part of the Russian government to let its yoke weigh as lightly as possible on these northern tribes, whom nature has so scantily endowed with her gifts. The tribute imposed on them is light; they are wholly exempt from the law of recruitment, and every encouragement appears to be given to their commerce; but the benevolent designs of the imperial government are often very ineffectually seconded by its local agents, who by their arbitrary measures, and yet more frequently by well-meant but injudicious interference, oppose almost insurmountable obstacles to the social improvement of the much-enduring natives. One nation only, the Tshuktshi (*Tsheskoos*\* is the name by which they are known among themselves,) have maintained their independence to the present day, an advantage for which they are no doubt mainly indebted to the mountainous and inaccessible character of the country they inhabit. The Russians have long since renounced the design of subjecting a people who possess so little to tempt the appetite of conquest, and a friendly intercourse has now existed for more than a century, the *Tsheskoos* repairing yearly in numerous parties to the fair of Ostrovnoye, to barter their furs and reindeer skins for the tobacco and iron tools which form the chief articles of exchange.

In proportion as the value of the Siberian fur-trade became better known to the Russians, their northern expeditions assumed more of a mercantile and less of a military character. In 1610, a company of merchants and *promyshleniki* or fur-hunters was formed, for the express purpose of making discoveries with a view to the extension of their trade. This company established itself at Turukhansk, on the Yenissei; but though it is known that they made several attempts to navigate the Arctic Ocean, we have no authentic record of the result of any of their expeditions.

In 1644, a Cossack of the name of Michael Stadukhin extended his excursions to the mouth of the Kolyma

\* The Russian nomenclature, like that of the East, is variable and uncertain. No set of globes or maps agree even in terms of as close affinity as these now before our consideration. This uncertainty in the names of places, more particularly, however, in their orthography, arises partly from the custom of travellers of endeavouring to describe the articulation of the natives. The natural consequence is, that an English, a French, and a German traveller will almost always vary in their orthography, when writing of half-civilized nations.

river, where he first became acquainted with the warlike Tsheskoeks, and where he succeeded in forming a settlement which has since assumed the denomination of Nishny Kolymsk. Stadukhin was the first who spread the tale of an extensive arctic continent, supposed to exist northward from Siberia, of which fabulous land a fragment continued long to figure upon our maps, till the more careful inquiries of Wrangel demonstrated, that if any such extensive land really exist, its distance from the northern coast of Asia must be too great to allow of its existence ever having really been ascertained.

In 1648, a Cossack of the name of Deshneff sailed from the mouth of the Kolyma, and, as the ocean happened in the summer of that year to be unusually free from ice, he succeeded in reaching the northern Pacific Ocean. A very brief report of this remarkable voyage, written by Deshneff himself, is preserved in manuscript in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg. Of Deshneff's little squadron not a single vessel survived the voyage; the last was wrecked in the Bay of Okhotsk, whence the hardy Cossack and his twenty-five surviving companions set off on foot, in search of some region where they might obtain provisions, and whence they might send an account of their misfortunes to their friends on the Kolyma. One entire winter they spent in this Siberian wilderness, subsisting chiefly on the bark of trees. Several of them died of hunger, but the survivors, in the course of the ensuing summer, built some boats, with which they went up the river Anadyr, which empties itself into the sea of the same name, almost the extreme point of east longitude on this coast; for *East Cape* is in west longitude. Here they discovered a tribe whom they induced to pay a *Yasak* or tribute. "Deshneff," says the Siberian Chronicle, "remained some time with these people, but as they afterwards refused to continue the payment of their *Yasak*, and showed themselves in many other respects exceedingly refractory, they were all put to death!" Deshneff made several subsequent attempts to acquire a more satisfactory knowledge of these northern seas. In 1652, he sailed from the Kolyma, in a large boat built expressly for his use, but from this his last voyage neither he nor any of his companions appear ever to have returned.

From this time forward frequent attempts were made, sometimes in summer with boats, and sometimes in winter with sledges, to explore the ocean to the north of the Yana and Kolyma rivers, with a view to the discovery of the mysterious land, and of the existence of which the Russians appear to have been fully convinced, and which the Tsheskoeks and other Siberian tribes described as a populous and fertile country. Wrangel's opinion seems to be, that this supposed northern land was in reality no other than the northwestern coast of America, which it is not impossible the Tsheskoeks may at some time have succeeded in reaching in their reindeer sledges across Behring's Strait.

It was in the year 1734, during the reign of the Empress Anna, that these expeditions were first confided to the care of men capable in some measure of availing themselves of the resources of science. In that year arrangements were made for the survey of the whole line of coast from the White Sea to Behring's Strait, and the plan adopted was well calculated to attain the object in view, namely, to determine whether it would be practicable for ships, sailing eastward from Archangel, to reach the waters of Kamtschatka. The expedition was formed of four separate divisions. Two ships were to sail from Archangel, and survey the coast as far as the mouth of the Ob; the second division, consisting of one vessel, was to sail from the last named river to the mouth of the Yennissei; the third was to sail from the Lena westward to the Yennissei; the fourth was also to sail

from the Lena, but eastward, and was directed, if possible, to make its way through Behring's Strait.

The first division, after many fruitless attempts, renewed year after year, succeeded in 1738 in reaching the Ob river, but this success may mainly be ascribed to the judicious plan of the commander Malygin, who during the winter sent out parties in sledges over the standing ice, to survey the northern promontory, which the drift ice prevented him from reaching during the summer.

The second division likewise succeeded, by dint of perseverance, in completing the task assigned to it, Lieutenant Owzyn having reached the Yennissei on the 1st of September, 1738.

The third and fourth divisions were less successful. The arduous task of sailing round the northern extremity of Asia was not fulfilled, and even at the present day our knowledge of its position is extremely vague and unsatisfactory, though we are accustomed to see it delineated on our maps with admirable precision. Lieutenant Laptew assigns to Cape St. Faddei a latitude of  $76^{\circ} 47'$ , but appears to have remained under the impression that this was not the northernmost point, and the longitude continues to this day undetermined. In his attempt to reach it, Laptew's ship was destroyed by the ice, and the following account of what he and his companions suffered will enable our readers to form some conception of the hardships to which the early discoverers of Siberia were constantly exposed:—

"On the 13th of August, (1740.) the vessel was surrounded and violently pressed upon by large masses of ice. They lost their bowsprit, and what was worse, they sprung a large leak. For three days they pumped incessantly, without being able to reduce the water in the hold; so, to lighten the ship, they were obliged to throw their guns overboard, and *land* their stores, &c. on the ice. By this means, the vessel was, for the moment, prevented from sinking, but the situation of the mariners was not the less dreadful. They were at a distance from the coast, surrounded by immense masses of ice, among which they were driven about by the current and the wind, with the momentary anticipation of seeing their already damaged vessel completely destroyed. In this fearful condition they remained six entire days, their destruction appearing all the time certain.

"On the 19th the weather became calm, and a severe frost set in, which covered the open places with a thin crust of ice. A few of the most daring offered to start on foot in search of the coast, which, it was calculated, must lie about twenty versts to the south. They set off on their dangerous journey, met a number of open places, which they found means to pass, ferrying themselves over on loose pieces of ice, and after much suffering and peril they reached the coast in safety. In the mean time the frost had become more and more intense, and, after an interval of three days, the sea was completely covered with ice. Laptew and his companions hastened to avail themselves of this circumstance. They loaded themselves with as large a stock of provisions as they could carry, and set off for the coast, which they happily reached; but after their first congratulations at this their escape, they discovered that their present situation also was none of the most gratifying, since many large streams, down which the ice was still floating in great quantities, made it impossible for them to reach their winter station on the Khotanga. They saw themselves constrained, for the present, to remain in this desolate wilderness, where they were unable to find any description of wood for firing; this they felt the greater want of, as the frost was becoming more and more intense, and they were wholly without shelter of any kind. To protect themselves in some measure against the cold, they dug holes in the frozen ground, into which they crept,



taking turns with each other for the undermost place. A party was daily sent to the ship, to bring on shore as much as possible of the remaining provisions; this, however, lasted only till the 30th of August, on which day a violent storm arose, that broke up the ice, and carried the ship with all its contents out to sea. The unfortunate crew was thus deprived of the greater portion of the supplies on which their last hopes rested, and remained on the inhospitable shore, wholly destitute of what under such circumstances is usually deemed indispensable, exposed to hunger and cold, to which many of them soon fell victims. The survivors did not, however, yield to despair; they bore their sufferings with admirable firmness and patience, and continued obedient to their commander.

"Thus passed away a terrible month. At length, on the 21st of September, the streams were sufficiently frozen over to allow Laptew and his companions to depart in search of their last year's winter residence. The difficulties and hardships which they had to encounter on the way were innumerable. A part of their scanty stores were laden on small sledges drawn by half-famished dogs; the remainder was carried by the exhausted mariners themselves. Thus for five-and-twenty days they wandered through unknown wilds, in which it was only by unremitting labour that they were able to force their way through ice and snow. During this part of the journey, twelve more of the crew died of cold and exhaustion. At length, completely worn out, they reached their winter residence on the Khotanga, where, for the first time, since nearly three months, they were able to repose themselves in a warm hut, where, for the first time also, they were again enabled to enjoy warm food, or indeed any food prepared by the aid of fire. Here Laptew resolved to remain till the return of spring, and then, as soon as the weather permitted, to return with the rest of his crew to the mouth of the Yenissei, where, in the magazines there established, he hoped to find a fresh supply of provisions, of which he stood greatly in need."

What Laptew was unable to accomplish by sea, he found means to do with the aid of sledges, and partly by himself, partly by the officers under his command, it was distinctly ascertained that between the mouth of the Lena and that of the Yenissei there was no point at which the northern coast of Asia was connected with any arctic continent.

It remains for us to speak of the fourth division of this gigantic Polar expedition. It sailed in August, 1735, but during the first year the vessel was not able to get more than 120 wersts to the west, where the commander Lieutenant Lassinius determined to winter, but where his men were attacked with scurvy, which raged with such violence that the lieutenant himself and forty-three of his crew fell victims to the malady, and of the nine survivors several died before they could reach Yakoutsck. In the following year a fresh crew was provided and placed under the command of Demetrius Laptew, who continued year after year his fruitless endeavours to reach Behring's Strait by sea, till in 1741 he finally renounced the attempt as impracticable.

It is to this vast expedition that we are indebted for our imperfect knowledge of the geography of northern Asia. Science, in those days, had not yet placed within the navigator's reach the many invaluable aids which are now at the seaman's command. The charts drawn up by the officers of the *Empress Anna*, therefore, are not to be relied on. The latitude even which they have assigned to the several points of that part of the coast visited and surveyed by the author of the work now before us, has seldom been found correct by later visitors; but the longitude almost always, and in most instances

the latitude also, were determined only by the ship's reckoning, upon which it is evident very little dependence is to be placed.

The ill success that attended the endeavours of Demetrius Laptew to sail round the north-eastern coast of Asia, seems to have stimulated rather than to have discouraged new adventurers. To this, a circumstance contributed which operated a complete revolution in the commerce of northern Siberia. Immense quantities of mammoth's bones had been discovered in the naked heaths situated between the rivers Khotanga and Anadyr, and had become to their fortunate discoverers a most valuable article of trade. The desire of gain induced many of the Siberian merchants to seek with unremitting eagerness for fresh deposits of antediluvian bones, and to these interested researches we are indebted for no inconsiderable portion of our present geographical knowledge of northern Asia. The most fortunate of these enterprising travellers appears to have been a merchant of the name of Laechow, to whom we owe the discovery of the large islands to the north of the Yana and Indigirka rivers. In these islands there appears to have been found an almost inexhaustible stock of mammoth's bones, of which their discoverer was careful to secure to himself the exclusive *exploitation* by an imperial patent.

In August, 1778, our own countryman Cook appeared in Behring's Strait. He surveyed as large a portion of the Tshuktschen or Tshesko coast as the opposing masses of ice allowed him to approach. He was the first navigator in the Siberian waters that ever attempted, on scientific principles, to determine the longitude of the most important points along the coast, and M. Von Wrangel does his illustrious predecessor the justice to confirm the correctness of his observations. Cook contributed not a little to strengthen the popular belief in the existence of an arctic continent of large extent. He assigned various grounds for the belief: the very trifling increase in the depth of the sea, as he receded from the coast; the swarms of wild geese and ducks that came every year from the north, towards the month of August; the peculiar conformation of the icebergs, &c. The appearance of birds of passage, however, arriving from the north, towards the end of winter, a circumstance on which Cook placed his principal reliance, as demonstrating the existence of a large northern land, is one that has since been satisfactorily explained. The wild geese subsist chiefly on fish, to which they are debarred access by the freezing of the rivers, and in search of which they are obliged to fly towards the open water, which is found farther towards the north, where it has now been ascertained that, even in the severest winter, when the thermometer of Reaumur stands at 45 degrees under the freezing point, the Arctic Ocean continues free from ice. In proportion as the ice breaks up the birds are obliged to fly towards the shore, where they usually arrive just before their moulting season, and whence they return towards the north as soon as the winter sets in again.

The achievements of Cook excited the emulation of the Russian government, and in 1787 Captain Billings sailed, with two vessels, from the Kolyma, with the view, among others, of ascertaining the practicability of going by sea eastward to Behring's Strait. Like all his predecessors, Billings was prevented by the ice from proceeding more than about a hundred miles along the coast. He felt the hopelessness of attempting to navigate this part of the ocean, and consulted with his officers, whether it might not be more advisable to choose the winter for the period of their researches, when they might proceed over the ice a considerable distance to the north, in sledges drawn by dogs. This plan, however, was soon abandoned, under an idea that it would be impossible to carry with them a sufficient stock of food for the large number of dogs that would be required. Billings then



left his ships in the Kolyma, and went over land to Okhotsk, where a vessel was fitted out for his use, in which he renewed his attempt in the ensuing summer, but in which he was unable to proceed farther than Cook had done before him.

No scientific expedition of any kind was undertaken in this part of the Arctic Ocean after that of Billings till the year 1809, but several discoveries were in the mean time made by the enterprising fur-hunters, and by the seekers after mammoth's bones. In the year just named, the Russian chancellor of state, Romanzow, commissioned a public officer of the name of Hedenström to complete the survey of the newly discovered Laechnow or Liaghoff Islands, and while engaged in this task the enterprising Russian made the important discovery, that the crust of ice by which the Arctic Ocean was supposed to be covered, extended only to a short distance northward. Hedenström, while engaged in the survey, sent one of his assistants, the Cossack Tatarimow, from Cape Kammenoy, the eastern extremity of New Siberia, to try how far he would be able to proceed to the north. Before he had gone more than twenty-five wersts he came to open waters, nor could he discover any signs of loose ice on the ocean that lay stretched before his eyes. We shall see, hereafter, that a similar phenomenon baffled all the attempts of Wrangel to proceed due north to any considerable distance over the ice.

Hedenström was recalled from the Laechnow Islands in 1811, when the farther survey was committed to one of his assistants, M. Pechenezyn, who made the dangerous experiment of spending the summer on these arctic islands, a period of the year when the breaking up of the ice renders it impossible to send any supplies from Siberia. He suffered the severest privations during the mild season; nevertheless, he and his companions made some interesting discoveries in the interior of the islands. They discovered large herds of wild reindeer, and evident signs that at no distant period these islands must have been either the fixed residence or the frequent resort of numerous tribes of men.

On the mammoth's bones, which may not inaptly be called the peculiar produce of Siberia and the northern islands, some interesting particulars are found in Hedenström's journal. He observed that the farther he proceeded towards the north, the smaller in size, but the more abundant in quantity, became these relics of a former world. In the Laechnow Islands it is a rare circumstance to discover a mammoth's tusk weighing more than three pood,\* whereas in the interior of Siberia it is not an uncommon thing to meet with one of four times that weight. On the other hand, the immense quantities of these bones found in the Siberian islands form one of the most remarkable phenomena connected with these singular remains. In the words of Sannikow, one of Hedenström's companions, "the first of the Laechnow Islands is little more than one mass of mammoth's bones," and though for upwards of eighty years the Siberian traders have been bringing over annually large cargoes of them, there appears as yet to be no sensible diminution in the apparently inexhaustible store. The teeth found in these islands are also much whiter and more fresh than those of the continent. The most valuable were met with on a low sandbank on the western coast; and there, when after a long prevalence of easterly winds the sea recedes, a fresh supply of mammoth's bones is always found. Hedenström infers from this that large quantities of these bones must exist at the bottom of the ocean.

Such is a brief abstract of the various attempts made at different times to extend the geographical knowledge

of Siberia previously to the expedition which forms the more immediate object of our present attention. "With the exception of those of Cook and Billings," says Von Wrangel, "none of these several expeditions can be said to have afforded satisfactory results in a scientific point of view. Their authors differ frequently more than 1½ degree from one another in the latitude assigned to the most important points on the coast. Thus the latitude of Cape Swätol Noss is 70° 53' according to Sarytschew; 71° 50' according to Hedenström; and 72° 50', according to Laptew. Moreover, the whole coast from Cape Schelagskoi to the North Cape remained completely unknown, and the account of Deshneff's navigation from the Kolyma to Behring's Strait was so vague and obscure, that the English hydrographer Burney considered it to strengthen his well-known hypothesis of the existence of a northern peninsula connecting the continents of Asia and America. Lastly, an assertion of Sennikow, that he had seen land to the north of the islands of Kotelnoi and New Siberia, had found many adherents; so that the geography of this part of the Russian empire continued in a state of complete uncertainty, while the remarkable researches of Ross, Parry, and Franklin, had led to the most exact survey and description of the northern coast of the new continent. To remove so important a blank in the geography of our country, the Emperor Alexander I., ordered two expeditions to be fitted out, under the command of naval officers, with a view to an exact survey of the North Eastern Coast of Siberia, from the mouth of the Yana to the Schelagskoi Noss, and also with a view to a more close examination of the islands situated in the Arctic Ocean."

One of these expeditions was placed under the command of Lieutenant Anjou, to whom we are indebted for a survey of the coast from the Lena to the Indigirka, and for a complete map of the Laechnow Islands, but whose personal narrative has not yet, we believe, ever been made public; the second expedition was that directed by Lieutenant Von Wrangel, whose task it was to complete the survey of the North Eastern Coast of Siberia, and to determine, if possible, the long pending enigma, of the existence of a large polar continent. Of this second expedition the reading world is now for the first time favoured with a detailed account.

Experience had sufficiently shown that, owing to the immense quantities of drift ice, no important results are to be hoped for from any attempt to navigate the polar seas during the summer, unless conducted upon an entirely new principle. The only practicable plan appeared to be, to select the winter for the period of their operations, when a thick and solid crust of ice was supposed to cover the ocean, over which it might be possible to proceed, in sledges drawn by dogs, to an almost indefinite distance. On the 23d of March, 1820, therefore, Messrs. Anjou and Von Wrangel left St. Petersburg; and on the 2d of November our author arrived at Nishney Kolymsk, which for three years was destined to form the centre of his operations.

In a brief chapter, of twenty pages, M. Von Wrangel describes his hasty journey from the one extreme to the other of his sovereign's vast dominions. To an observant eye, however, many interesting facts will present themselves, even where time has been measured out in the most niggardly fashion. Some of his suggestions for the social improvement of these northern regions are admirable, and will meet, we trust, with that attention from the Russian government, to which they are so justly entitled. Nature has endowed Siberia with an invaluable advantage, in the many splendid rivers which flow from Central Asia to the Frozen Ocean, nearly all which are navigable throughout the greater part of their extent. By means of these rivers it is that the northern districts are supplied with many of those articles which

\* The Russian pood is equal to 40 pounds Russian, or about 36 pounds English.

there are deemed luxuries, but which in Europe are counted among the most indispensable necessities of life. It is seldom, however, more than eight or nine weeks that the navigation continues completely open, and when the ice remains unusually late, or returns unusually early, the inhabitants of the bleak heaths washed by the Frozen Ocean must subsist, for nearly two years, almost exclusively on the fish caught during their brief interval from frost, or on the meat of such animals (chiefly reindeer and wild geese) as they have been able to kill in their summer months. The establishment of a single steamer on each river, in M. Von Wrangel's opinion, would ensure a regular and constant supply to these unhappy tenants of an ever-frozen land. The establishment of one steamer on the Lena "would give new life to the whole line of navigation, 4000 wersts in extent, from Irkutsk to the waters of the ocean; industry would be developed in these regions; the inhabitants would receive the necessities of life with more regularity and at an infinitely lower price; and the brief Siberian summer would be lengthened by being judiciously taken advantage of. The inexhaustible forest on the shores of the upper Lena would afford an ample supply of cheap fuel, and to the inhabitants a new species of occupation."

At Yakoutsk we are already made acquainted in some degree with the rude character of northern Siberia:—

"The town is situated on a naked plain on the left shore of the Lena. In the spacious streets are seen only mean houses or huts, surrounded by high wooden palings, but in vain the eye wanders amid the gloomy assemblage of boards and beams in search of a tree or even of a stunted bush. Nothing announces the presence of the short summer, unless it be the absence of snow, which, with its dazzling whiteness would do something to interrupt the sombre grey uniformity of the scene."

Yakoutsk, however, is an improving place, and luxury, we are assured, is making rapid strides among its inhabitants. The general adoption of glazed windows is given as an instance, though even here these must in severe weather be removed, and large plates of ice substituted for them, no glass being able to resist the intense frost of a Siberian winter. Snow moistened with water supplies, in such cases, the place of putty, and closes the windows more completely against the admission of air, than all our southern appliances of luting or double sashes. The moral improvement of the population appears, however, scarcely to keep pace with the progress of luxury:—

"Very little attention is paid to education. Children are usually, immediately after their birth, consigned to the care of a Yakoot nurse, who feeds them up as well as she can, and, after two or three years generally returns them, tolerably *Yakotised*, to the parents. As they grow up they learn a little reading and writing from the priest or his assistant, and are then initiated into the mysteries of the Siberian fur-trade, or obtain small appointments about the government offices, in the hope of one day attaining a *rank*, a thing here likewise eagerly sought after. This system of education accounts for a phenomenon that at first surprised me, namely, that even in the better circles the Yakoot language prevails almost to as great an extent as French does in our two principal cities. This struck me particularly at a splendid entertainment given by one of the wealthiest fur-traders in honour of the patron saint of his wife. Although the company consisted of the governor, the principal clergy, and public officers, and of a few merchants, the greater part of the conversation was so interlarded with Yakoot-

ish fragments that I was scarcely able to take any share in it."

At Yakoutsk Messrs. Anjou and Von Wrangel parted, the former descending the Lena by water, while the latter proceeded over land to Nishney Kolymsk. Travelling in sledges or carriages ceases at Yakoutsk. Beyond it no beaten road is to be found in Siberia. Our author, therefore, had to proceed on horseback, over the mountainous part of his journey, till he reached the northern plains, where sledges drawn by dogs form the usual winter conveyance. His first camping out, on the night after his departure from Yakoutsk, appears to have given him a lively foreboding of the kind of service for which he was preparing. The thermometer, when he arose to make his morning's toilet, stood at two degrees below the freezing point ( $43^{\circ}$  according to Fahrenheit).

"It was literally with a shudder that I thought of the Siberian winter before me, when only a few degrees of frost are currently denominated *warm weather*, and it seemed to me inconceivable how I should be able to endure such a long continuance of intense cold. But man is a creature of all climates and all zones; necessity, resolution, and habit, soon enable him to overcome the severest corporal sufferings and inconveniences. A few weeks later, it seemed to me, as to the inhabitants of Kolymsk, that  $10^{\circ}$  of cold ( $23^{\circ}$  below the freezing point of Fahrenheit) was quite a mild temperature."

In the valley of Mioré we are introduced to a Yakoot who passes for a Cossack in that part of the world. His lands and herds are valued at upwards of half a million of rubles, yet he retains almost all the habits of his race. One of the distinguishing characteristics of this pastoral nation, as of the Hindoos, appears to be an extravagant fondness for litigation, to gratify which they will often undertake fatiguing and costly journeys, when the matter in dispute does not perhaps exceed half a ruble. M. Von Wrangel hints that the Russian functionaries are not slow in encouraging a propensity from which they derive a material part of their income.

An English groom would find some difficulty in picturing to himself the habits of the Yakoot horses:—

"They will often," says M. Von Wrangel, "make the most fatiguing journeys, of more than three months' duration, and though during the whole of this time they receive no nourishment but the shrunk and half decayed grass, which they are obliged to scrape with their hoofs from under the snow and ice, nevertheless they continue strong and in good condition, and manifest the most astonishing powers of endurance. It is remarkable, also, that the Yakoot horses preserve their teeth uninjured to a very advanced age, whereas those of European horses are worn away as they grow old. This may possibly be occasioned by the hard corn on which ours are fed, while those of Siberia never receive oats, nor indeed any thing but the soft grass. The Siberian horses also continue young much longer than ours do; one of them will do good service to his master for thirty years."

Anxious as we are to bring our author to Nishney Kolymsk, the point at which his scientific labours properly commenced, we cannot refuse ourselves the pleasure of pausing for a moment, to make our readers acquainted with Father Michael, the Russian priest of Saschiversk,\* a small town on the banks of the Indigirka; so small indeed, that it consists only of a church

\* Siberian geographers may, however faulty in nomenclature, claim the praise of great accuracy in detail. This village of five huts figures away on our globes under *Zaterersk* and numerous other designations.

and four or five huts, the whole population being composed of the priest, his brother, a Yakoot postmaster, and two Russian families. Consigned as Father Michael was to what must have appeared so insignificant a station, he has found means, by the zealous discharge of his pastoral duties, to make his name known and respected throughout a large portion of his sovereign's dominions. Father Michael, when M. Von Wrangel visited him, in 1820, was eighty-seven years of age, sixty of which had been passed in his humble living. During this period he had not merely baptised, but had really initiated into the first principles of the Christian religion, more than 15,000 Yakoots, Tungusians, and Yukaheers; and by his preaching and friendly counsel, and more perhaps by his example, he had found means to operate an evident improvement in their moral and social condition. Age had in no way cooled the zeal of this Siberian apostle, who, regardless alike of peril and of the rigours of the climate, was still in the habit of travelling 2000 versts\* every year to baptise the new-born children of his widely scattered flock, to whom he not only afforded spiritual consolation and temporal advice, but was ready, on an emergency, to assume the office of physician, a character to which he may have been indebted for no small part of his influence over his rude parishioners. Father Michael, however, was not wholly absorbed by his clerical duties. Old as he was, he still went a fur-hunting to the neighbouring mountains, and relied upon his rifle for no small addition to his little income; and he had succeeded in planting a little kitchen garden, in which he reared potatoes, turnips, cabbages, and other European vegetables, exotics usually known only by name in these remote northern regions. Among other dainties, the old man placed before his guest a cake made of fish flour, an article of his own invention. The fish, having been completely dried, is rubbed into a fine powder, and, if kept from damp, may be preserved for a long time. M. Von Wrangel assures us, that, with the addition of a little wheaten flour, very savoury pastry may be made of it.

The cold became more severe as our author advanced further towards the north, and before reaching Sredne-Kolymsk, though yet in the middle of October, the thermometer had already marked 29° below zero. He thought it high time, therefore, to make his winter toilette, the particulars of which may be interesting to those of our readers who are desirous of studying foreign fashions.

"Over my customary travelling uniform I had first to pull a *camisole* with sleeves and breast-piece, both lined with the fur of the silver fox. Over my feet I drew double socks of soft young reindeer skin; and, over these, high boots or *torbasy* of similar material. When riding, I put on, in addition, my *nakoléniki* or knee-pieces. Lastly came the *Kukhlanka*, or over-all, a sort of wide sack with sleeves, made of double reindeer skin, with fur inside and out, and a hood of fur hanging down the back. There were also a number of small pieces to protect the face; the *nanossnik* for the nose, the *nabovodnik* for the chin, the *naúshniki* for the ears, the *nalobnik* for the forehead, &c.; and to complete my costume came an immense fox-skin cap with long ears. I was so embarrassed by this cumbersome, and to me unaccustomed dress, that it was only with the assistance of my attendant I was able to mount my horse. Fortunately, the skin of the reindeer is exceedingly light, considering its warmth and closeness; otherwise it would be impossible to bear the weight of so many pieces of fur."

\* The Russian verst is equal to about two-thirds of an English mile.

Nishney-Kolymsk is a wretched fishing village, consisting of a church and forty-two houses or huts, into which the inmates creep for shelter during their nine months' winter, but which are left to take care of themselves during what are called the summer months, when the whole population wander away to catch fish and reindeer, of which the meat when frozen is laid by as a stock for the winter. Completely exposed to the piercing winds that come sweeping from the north pole, the climate of the place is even more severe than its latitude would imply. On the 2d of November, when M. Von Wrangel arrived, the thermometer stood at 32° (36° below zero of Fahrenheit); and though in summer the temperature sometimes rises to 18° (70° of Fahrenheit), yet the average for the year is not above 5° below the freezing point of Réaumur. During the first week in September the Kolyma is usually frozen over, and in January the cold reaches 43° (59° below Fahrenheit's zero), when the very act of breathing becomes painful, and the snow itself throws off a vapour! This intense cold is usually accompanied by a thick mist, a clear day being of rare occurrence during the whole winter. For eight and thirty days the sun never rises, and for fifty-two it never sets. The summer itself brings little enjoyment with it, for in the early part of July the gnats or mosquitoes appear in such countless swarms, that they fairly darken the atmosphere, when large fires are lighted of dried moss or leaves, under the smoke of which not only the inhabitants but even the cattle seek shelter from the persecution of their diminutive tormentors. These insects, however, perform one most important office for the good people of Nishney-Kolymsk, by driving the wild reindeer from the forest to the open heath or *tundra*. The herds wander by thousands during the gnat season towards the sea-coast, when, more particularly while crossing the rivers, large numbers of them are easily killed by the hunters.

Vegetation is almost extinct in this northern region. A few berries are in favourable seasons collected by the women; but with this exception no plant grows that can be used for food. The soil never thaws; and of the few stunted trees that still linger about the Lower Kolyma, the roots seldom strike into the ground, but lie for the most part stretched along the surface, as though they shrunk from the thick strata of ice below. A few wild flowers adorn the heaths in summer; the rose and the forget-me-not then invite the sentimental lover to expatiate on their beauty, if love and sentiment can indeed exist where all Nature is covered with an almost perpetual shroud—a north wind, even in summer, scarcely ever failing to bring with it a snow-storm.

The district of Kolymsk is calculated to contain 2498 male inhabitants, including 325 Russians and Cossacks. Of this population, 2173 are subjected to the *yassak* or direct tax, which produces 803 fox-skins, 28 sables, and 10847 rubles in money. The Russians are mostly the descendants of real or supposed criminals; the Cossacks claim the original conquerors of Siberia as their ancestors, form a distinct corporation, and are exempt from the *yassak*. Our author speaks much of the social virtues of these simple-minded denizens of the North, who, during their long and dreary winter, find means to relieve the tedium and monotony of their existence by song, dance, and various other unpretending in-door amusements.

The dwellings of the Russians along the Lower Kolyma vary but little from those of the Yakoots and other Siberian aborigines. The trees in this part of the country being too stunted to afford any materials for building, the inhabitants depend for their supply of timber wholly upon the drift wood brought down the river by the annual inundations which seldom fail to accompany the breaking up of the ice. As soon as a sufficient number of trees has been collected, a kind of log hut is constructed,



the interstices of which are filled up with moss and clay, and for the sake of warmth a mound of earth is raised all round to a level with the window. These huts measure usually from two to three fathoms square, and one and a half fathom in height. In one corner stands the *tshural*, or fire-hearth, the smoke of which escapes by a small hole in the roof: but, in a few houses, luxury has extended already to the adoption of regular Russian stoves with chimneys. Low and incomplete partitions divide the sleeping-places of the several members of the family, and the rest of the dwelling is made to serve all the multifarious offices of kitchen, workshop, sitting and reception room, broad benches being placed around, on which reindeer skins are spread as a ready couch for an occasional guest. Such a hut is usually provided with two small windows of ten or twelve inches square, through which, if glazed, a scanty light would find its way, but, as a substitute for glass, fish-bladders are used in summer, and in winter plates of ice, seldom less than six inches in thickness, through which only a very feeble portion of daylight is able to pierce. A small store-house usually stands by the side of the dwelling, and the roofs of both are fitted up with a scaffolding for the drying of fish.

Little value appears to be set on cleanliness of any kind. Public baths are maintained by the order of government, though rarely visited by the inhabitants. Linen or calico is worn only by the more wealthy, and among them the use of it is mostly confined to the women. A shirt of soft reindeer skin with the fur inside, is generally worn next the skin. The outer side of this garment is dyed with a red colour obtained from a decoction of alder bark, and round the edges and the sleeves it is ornamented with narrow stripes of beaver and other skin, which are obtained at high prices from the *Tshuktshi*. The trousers, likewise of reindeer skin, descend half way down the leg, and over the whole comes the *kamleya* of thick tanned reindeer skin, without the fur. The *kamleya* soon receives a dark yellow tint, from the smoky atmosphere by which the wearer is almost surrounded. The above constitutes the home costume; but when the *Kolymskite* dandy ventures abroad he takes care to array himself in various other descriptions of fur, of which some conception may be formed from the account, given a few pages back, of M. Von Wrangel's travelling accoutrements.

Except on state occasions, the dress of the women differs but little from that of the men, unless in the arrangement of the head gear.

"To form a just conception of life on the banks of the *Kolyma*," says M. Von Wrangel, "one must have spent some time with the inhabitants. One must have seen them in their winter dwellings and in their summer *balagans*; one must have shot down their rapid streams in the light canoe, must have climbed mountains and rocks with them, or dashed in their light dog-drawn sledges through the most piercing cold over the boundless tundra; one must in short have become one of themselves. Such was our life during the three years we spent here. We lived with them, dressed like them, fed on their dried fish, and shared with them the hardships and privations inseparable from the climate, and the frequent want even of food which it brings along with it.

"Let us begin with the spring. The fishery forms their most important pursuit; indeed the very existence of the whole population depends upon it. The locality of *Nishney-Kolymsk*, however, is unfavourable, and the inhabitants are obliged to migrate at this season to more suitable parts of the river. As soon as the winter ceases, they accordingly abandon their dwellings in search of some convenient spot, where they forthwith construct a *balagan*, or light summer hut, and immediately com-

mence their hostilities upon the piscatory tribe. Most of the *Nishney-Kolymskites* have regular country-houses of this description at the mouths of the several creeks and rivulets, which they begin to visit in April, in order to prepare for the campaign. In the middle of May, when the merchants arrive from the fair of *Ostrownoye*, on their return to *Yakouts*, the whole population abandons the little place, leaving the whole town to the guardianship of one Cossack sentinel, and perhaps one or two old women, whom age prevents from joining in the general pursuit.

"Spring is the most trying season of the whole year. The store collected during the summer and autumn has usually been consumed for some time; the fish do not always make their appearance immediately, and the dogs, exhausted by their winter work, and yet more by the severe fast to which they have for some time been subjected, are too feeble to allow their masters to avail themselves of the *noat*,\* to catch a few elks and wild reindeer. Famine then appears in its most horrible form. Crowds of *Tungusians* and *Yukacheers* come flocking into the Russian villages in search of some subsistence. Pale and ghost-like they stagger about, and greedily devour every species of garbage that falls in their way. Bones, skins, thongs of leather, every thing in short that the stomach will receive, is eagerly converted into food. But small is the relief they find; for the unthrifty townspeople are by this time almost as ill off themselves, and living upon the scanty remnant of fodder stored up for the use of the dogs, so that many of these faithful and valuable animals perish nearly every year of hunger. There is a storehouse established by the government, where rye flour is sold to every comer; but the expense of conveying it from so enormous a distance enhances the price to such a degree that few are able to avail themselves of the facility thus afforded them. Although the additional accommodation is granted them of not paying before autumn, still there are not many who can afford to give twenty rubles for a pood of flour, which moreover has often been damaged during the protracted journey it has had to perform. Three of these periods of horror did I witness during three succeeding springs, and even now I shudder when I reflect on the scenes of suffering which I beheld, and of which it would be utterly impossible for me to attempt a description.

"It is just when famine is at its worst that relief arrives. Suddenly countless swarms of birds make their appearance. Swans, geese, ducks, and several descriptions of snipes. These are the first heralds of spring, and at their coming hunger and want are at an end. Old and young, men and women, all that can walk or run, now rush out with guns, bows, and sticks, to kill as many as they may. In June the ice breaks up, a profusion of fish comes crowding into the river, and all hands are in movement to avail themselves of the short season of grace to provide a store for the coming year. But here a new misfortune often assails them. The stream is not strong enough to float away with sufficient rapidity the mighty masses of ice. These accumulate in the narrows and shoals, and the water, arrested in its course, quickly overflows the whole of the low country, and, if the inhabitants are not quick enough in driving their horses to the hills, the poor animals are infallibly lost. In the summer of 1822, we had such an inundation at

\* When the warmth of the spring sun thaws the surface of the snow it freezes again during the night, whereby a thin crust of ice is formed, strong enough to bear a sledge with its team of dogs. In this condition the snow is called *noat*, over which the elks and reindeer are pursued during the night, and as, owing to their greater weight, they are constantly breaking through the ice, they are caught by the hunters with little trouble.



Nishney-Kolymsk, which came upon us so suddenly that we had only just time to take refuge with a few of our most indispensable articles upon the flat roofs of our huts, where we were forced to remain for upwards of a week. The water rushed with fearful rapidity between the houses, and the whole place looked like a little archipelago of house tops, among which the inhabitants were merrily rowing about in their canoes, paying one another friendly visits and catching fish.

"More or less these inundations occur every year, and when the waters subside the main fishery with nets begins. Fish form the chief food of man and dog, and for the yearly consumption of the hundred families that compose the little community of Nishney-Kolymsk, at least three millions of herrings are required. Many other kinds of fish are caught at this time, among which is the *Nelma*, a large description of salmon trout, but the first fish are generally thin, and are mostly converted into *yukhala* for the dogs; that is to say, cut open, cleaned, and dried in the air. From the entrails an abundance of train oil is obtained, which is used for food as well as for fuel. The *yukola* is distinguished from the *yukhala* merely by the selection of a better kind of fish, and by greater care in the preparation.

"The proper season for bird hunting is when the animals are moulting, when having lost their feathers they are unable to fly. Large detachments are then sent off from the fishing stations, and numbers of swans and geese are killed with guns, bows, and sticks. The produce of this chase is said to have diminished greatly of late years. Formerly it was no unusual thing for the hunters to bring home several thousands of geese in one day, whereas now they are content if they can catch as many during the whole season.

"While the men are fishing and hunting, the women make the best use of the interval of fine weather, to collect the scanty harvest which the vegetable kingdom yields them, in the shape of a few berries and aromatic herbs. The gathering in of the berries is a season of gaiety, like the vintage in southern climes. The young women wander about in large parties, spending the nights in the open air, and amusing themselves with song and dance, and other innocent diversions. The berries themselves are preserved by pouring cold water over them, and freezing them, in which condition they form one of the favourite dainties during the winter. Besides the berries they collect at this time the *makarasha*, a mealy root found in large quantities in the subterranean storehouses of the field-mice. The young girls appear to have a peculiar tact in discovering the magazines of these little notable animals, whom, without the least remorse, they plunder of the fruits of their provident industry."

Such is life on the Kolyma during the short summer, a season of activity for all, for in addition to the chief occupations of which we have just laid a brief epitome before our readers, there are many other, though less momentous, calls upon the industry of the inhabitants. Their huts perhaps want repairing, their boats have to be mended, and in the forests the traps must be looked after. The Russians at Nishney-Kolymsk are supposed to set about 7500 traps in the neighbouring country, which are visited about eight or ten times during the winter, and at each time they expect to find something in every tenth trap. The animals mostly caught are sables and foxes. The elks, the wild reindeer, and the wild sheep, also offer an attraction for the adventurous hunter, while others more ambitious wander forth in search of the mightier bear. The bear-hunters are the heroes of the Kolyma, and tales of their marvellous achievements form the standing topic during the long winter evenings, when old and young crowd about the warm *tshuroa*, to while away their idle hours by the

songs and traditions of their Russian ancestors as well as of their adopted land.

The best friend of man in almost every clime is the dog, but in northern Siberia existence would scarcely be possible without the aid of this invaluable animal. All along the Arctic Ocean the dog is almost the only beast of burden. He is harnessed to the light sledge, or *narte*, which will carry no inconsiderable load, and in which, during winter, the natives perform journeys of incredible length. The Siberian dog bears a strong resemblance to the wolf. He has a long pointed snout, sharp upright ears, and a long bushy tail. Some of them have short hair, others a tolerably thick fur, and they are met with of all imaginable colours. Their size also differs very much, but a dog is not thought fit for the sledge if less than one arshin and two wershok high, and one arshin and five wershok long.\* Their barking resembles the howling of a wolf. They always remain in the open air. In summer they dig holes in the frozen earth to cool themselves, and sometimes they will spend the whole day in the water to escape from the persecution of the gnats. Against the intense cold of winter they seek shelter by burying themselves under the snow, where they lie rolled up with the snout covered by the bushy tail. Of the cubs, the males only are usually kept, the females are mostly drowned, only one or two being entertained by each father of a family to preserve the breed. The rearing of these dogs forms an important occupation, and requires no little skill and judgment. A dog may be put to the sledge when a year old, but cannot be subjected to hard work before his third winter. The team of a sledge seldom consists of less than twelve of these dogs, of whom one is used as leader, upon whose breeding and docility the safety of the whole party depends. No dog must be used as a leader unless he be perfectly obedient to the voice of his master, nor unless the latter be certain that the animal will not be diverted one moment from his course by the scent of any kind of game. This last point is one of the highest importance, and if the dog has not been well broken in, but turns to the right or left, the rest of the dogs will immediately join in the pursuit, when the sledge is of course overturned, and the whole pack continue the chase until some natural obstacle intervenes to arrest their course. A well-taught leader, on the other hand, not only will not allow himself to be seduced from his duty, but will often display the most astonishing tact in preventing the rest of the team from yielding to their natural instinct. On the boundless tundra, during a dark night, while the surrounding atmosphere is obscured by the falling snow, it is to the intelligence of his leading dog that the traveller is constantly indebted for his preservation. If the animal has once been the same road before, he never fails to discover the customary halting-place, though the hut may have been completely buried under the drifting snow. Suddenly the dog will remain motionless upon the trackless and unbroken surface, and by the friendly wagging of his tail announce to his master that he need only fall to work with his snow-shovel to find the door of the hut that offers him a warm lodging for the night. The snow-shovel on these winter excursions appears to be an appendage without which no traveller ventures upon a journey.

In summer the dog is no less serviceable than in winter. As in the one season he is yoked to the sledge, so in the other he is employed to draw the canoe up against the stream, and here they display their sagacity in an equally surprising manner. At a word, they halt, or where an opposing rock bars their progress on the one side, they will plunge into the water, swim across the

\* Three Russian arshins make seven English feet, and each arshin is divided into sixteen wershok.

river, and resume their course along the opposite bank. In short, the dog is as indispensable to the Siberian settler, as the tame reindeer to the Laplander. The mutual attachment between the Siberian and his dog is in proportion to their mutual dependence on each other. M. Von Wrangel relates remarkable instances of the extent to which he has seen some of the people carry their fondness for their dogs. In 1821 an epidemic disease broke out among the dogs in Siberia, and carried off many thousands of them.

"A Yukaher family had lost the whole of the twenty dogs of which they had recently been possessed, and two newly-born cubs were all that remained. As these animals were still blind, and without a mother's care, it scarcely appeared possible to preserve them. The Yukaher's wife, to save the last remnant of the wealth of her house, resolved that the two dogs should share the milk of her breast with her own child. She was rewarded. The two adopted sucklings thrived wonderfully, and became the ancestors of a new and vigorous race of dogs."

The sufferings of the poor inhabitants, in consequence of the loss of the dogs, through the epidemic malady that raged in 1821 and 1822, were dreadful in the extreme. Yet will it be believed, that an order was once actually issued by the government at St. Petersburg, to destroy all the dogs throughout the north of Siberia, "on account of their consuming such quantities of provisions, and thereby occasioning such frequent famines." The order was not executed, because it would have required the whole Russian army to enforce the command, and after a while means were found to enlighten the rulers upon the absurd tyranny of their proposed "reform." We see thus that England is not the only country where a colonial minister will at times indulge in the most extravagant vagaries.

Let us now accompany the Siberian into the interior of his hut, to which he returns as soon as the frost has put a stop to his fishing and hunting. The walls are carefully caulked with clay and moss; a fresh mound of earth is collected outside; the *tshural* is repaired, and fresh ice-panes fastened into the windows. All this is seldom finished before the beginning of December. Then the several members of the family begin to creep more and more closely around their warm hearth, where a crackling fire yields the native of the arctic zone his only substitute for the absent sun. The flame of the *tshural* and of one or more lamps is then seen glimmering through the ice-panes, while from the low chimney arises a glowing column of smoke, carrying up with it, every now and then, a complete shower of sparks. The dogs crouch about the house, and three or four times a day, at tolerably regular intervals, more frequently perhaps when the moon shines, they raise a most tremendous howling, which is audible to a great distance over the plain. A low door, lined with the skin of a reindeer, or, if possible, with that of a white bear, admits the stranger into the interior of this dwelling. There the father and his sons are seen mending their nets, or making bows, arrows, and hunting-spears. The women are seen sorting and dressing the furs which the men have perhaps brought home from their last visit to the traps, or they may be engaged in the feminine task of repairing their own or their husbands' garments, on which occasions the sinews of the reindeer are made to supply the place of thread.

The dainties prepared by the culinary skill of the Kolymska matrons are not exactly calculated to excite the appetite of a Parisian gourmand. Fish and reindeer flesh form the invariable *pièces de résistance*, and train oil is the constantly recurring sauce. Yet, even with these scanty materials to go to work upon, female ingenuity is seldom at a loss to vary the bill of fare. An

accomplished French cook will boast of his ability to dress eggs in three hundred and sixty-five different ways, and the housewife on the banks of the Kolyma shows herself almost equally inventive. Thus we have cakes made of the roe of the fish, or of the dry fish flour pounded in a mortar. Then the belly of the fish is chopped small, and, with the addition of a little reindeer flesh and makarsha root, thickened with train oil, the delicate compound appears before us in the shape of a savoury forced ball. Smoked reindeer tongues are seldom produced, unless in honour of a guest, and small slices of frozen fish eaten raw are esteemed in these distant regions as highly as the *glace à la vanille* at the Café de Paris. Salt never enters their food, but is always produced if a stranger partakes their meal. Tea and sugar are seen only at the tables of the wealthy, on which occasions the *yukola* or dried fish supplies the place of toast or biscuit, bread being a delicacy which few can afford to indulge in. Flour, always an expensive article, is seldom seen except among the aristocracy of the place, and is generally used for the composition of a beverage called *aturán*. This is prepared by roasting the flour in a pan, and stirring it into a paste, with a little melted butter or fish oil. Upon this is poured boiling water, and the infusion is drunk warm out of cups. Our author assures us the beverage is both nutritive and agreeable; but he had gone through a three years' seasoning, and custom may go far to reconcile the palate even to the *bonne bouche* of a Siberian cuisine.

Flirtation, courtship, love, and jealousy, still maintain their empire over the youthful heart, even in the remote north. It is the daily office of the young ladies of Kolymsk to fetch water from the river, where a well is cut in the ice. Here the love-sick youth never fails to watch for the arrival of his mistress, and manifests his attachment by filling her pails, and perchance even carrying them home for her. Such an act of gallantry is looked on as a formal declaration of love, and always excites the envy and *médiancée* of less favoured rivals. The hole in the ice is the daily gossiping place for the young of both sexes, and we can easily believe what we are told, that the fair damsels are exceedingly careful that the water pails shall be freshly filled every day.

Shortly after M. von Wrangel's arrival at Nishney-Kolymsk, the little place was put quite into commotion by the arrival of Captain Cochrane, whose delightful account of his pedestrian excursions through these regions are already well known to the British public. Our countryman remained some time there, and manifested a wish to accompany the expedition over the ice of the Arctic Ocean, for which the Russian seaman was preparing; "but such an increase to our party," says our author, "on a journey where every additional pound weight of luggage had to be seriously considered, would have occasioned so many difficulties with respect to sledges, provisions, and the like, that I deemed it expedient not to avail myself of his offer." Disappointed in his wish to join the main expedition, Captain Cochrane contented himself with accompanying a small party to the fair of Ostrownoye, whither von Wrangel despatched one of his officers to cultivate the good graces of the Tshetkocz, whose country he was about to visit. Previously to the departure of the Englishman, however, our author determined to astonish the good people of the town by a splendid entertainment in honour of the stranger.

"It was on Twelfth Night that I invited all the élite of the place to a *welsherinka* or ball. I chose one of the largest houses for the occasion. It belonged to a Cossack, who happened to be something of a violin player. The ball-room, about eighteen feet square, was sumptuously illuminated by several lamps of train oil. The walls and

benches having been subjected to a washing (an operation which it would be impossible to say when they had last undergone,) were ornamented with some attempt at drapery, and on the floor some yellow sand was scattered. By way of refreshments for the ladies, I had procured tea and lump sugar, together with a few plates of cedar-nuts. The supper consisted of some fish-cakes, yukala, and frozen reindeer marrow. At five o'clock our guests appeared, in their best furs, and their gaudiest holiday attire. After the first few exclamations of wonder and admiration at the luxury and splendour of the entertainment, the ladies took their seats on the benches along the wall, and commenced singing some of our national melodies. The younger part of the company amused themselves with a variety of *jeux innocens*, and danced slowly and heavily, as though it had been a task, to the unaccountable tones which the not very pliant fingers of our musical host, an old reindeer hunter, contrived to draw from his cracked fiddle, two of the strings of which were of reindeer sinews, the other two of twisted silk. The men were grouped around the *ishural*, and seemed exceedingly to enjoy the little addition of brandy which I offered them as a qualification to their tea. At ten o'clock the party broke up, and my guests departed with endless assurances of gratitude for the costly manner in which I had entertained them. Nor were these mere set speeches; on the contrary, they were honestly meant, for even in the subsequent years of our stay, the magnificent and delightful *Prasnik* was often referred to, as a bright point in the gloomy uniformity of their customary manner of living."

M. von Wrangel found on his arrival at Nishney-Kolymsk, that the necessary preparations for his expedition had been neglected, and all his endeavours to collect the requisite number of sledges, and the requisite quantity of food for the dogs having failed, he was obliged, for that year, to renounce his journey to the north over the icy surface of the Arctic Ocean. Not, however, wholly to lose his time, he determined to attempt a month's excursion along the coast, of which only a very small portion was at that time known. The inhabitants had long stood greatly in awe of the Tshuktsi or Tshes-koes, and had therefore seldom ventured farther than the Baranow Rocks, which were deemed the frontier mark of the Russian territory. It was known, however, that the Tsheskoes themselves were little in the habit of venturing so far towards the Russian line, the coast from the Baranow Rocks to Cape Shelagaskoi being generally left unoccupied by both parties, as a sort of neutral ground. Our author resolved accordingly to devote the time that remained to him to a survey of the coast as far as the above cape.

The place of rendezvous was Sukharnoye at the mouth of the Kolyma, a "town" consisting of two uninhabited houses, to which a few families are in the habit of repairing during the fishing season.

"Fifty vershs before reaching Sukharnoye we lost sight of the stunted shrubs, and found ourselves in one unbounded plain of snow, unbroken, unless here and there by an occasional fox-trap. A man accustoms himself, no doubt, to every thing in time, but the first impression produced by this gigantic shroud admits of no comparison with any other object in nature, and night, by obscuring the spectacle, comes as a positive relief."

M. von Wrangel had sent one of his officers, as we have already seen, to the fair of Ostrownoye, a scene of which a lively description has been given by Cochrane, and with which we will, therefore, not detain our readers, though the spirited report of M. Matiuschkin is one that will well repay perusal. It was while the one party was absent at the fair, that the gallant lieutenant with another

of his officers started for Cape Shelagaskoi. Nine sledges were prepared; three for the travellers, and six to carry fish for men and dogs; and as this species of traveling is one which none of our modern tourists have as yet had an opportunity of describing, we will endeavour to give our readers some idea of the appearance of the little caravan at starting.

We have already seen something of the winter traveling costume in these regions; and when it is borne in mind that the party contemplated a month's excursion in February over the ice of the Polar Sea, it will be taken for granted that none of the multitudinous appliances of furs on furs would be left behind. During the whole period of the journey, they could not once hope to obtain the shelter of a hut; the protection of an iceberg, to keep off the north wind, was the utmost they could look for when encamping for the night. A fire even was a comfort by no means to be relied on, for unless they found a sufficient supply of drift wood along the coast, it would be impossible for them to cheer their night's lodging by indulging in the luxury of a blazing log. These points must be borne in mind when estimating the delights of an arctic sledging party.

"The articles we carried with us were the following: a conic tent formed of reindeer skins, two hatchets, a pocket lantern, a few wax lights, a plate of iron to light a fire on, an iron tripod, a tea-kettle, a boiler, some changes of linen for each of us, and a bear skin as mattress, with a double reindeer skin counterpane for every two of the party. Our instruments were: two chronometers, a second watch, a sextant with a quicksilver horizon, a spirit thermometer, three amplitude compasses, one of these with a prism, two telescopes, a ribbon measure, and a few other trifles. Provisions for five men for a month:  $2\frac{1}{2}$  pood of rye biscuit,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  pood of meat, 10 pounds of soup tablets, 2 pounds of tea, 4 pounds of candied sugar, 8 pounds of groats, 3 pounds of salt, 39 portions of strong spirit, 12 pounds of tobacco, and 200 pieces of smoked yukhala. The cargo of each sledge was about 25 pood, tightly packed, and so closely fastened by means of thongs, that the sledge might be overturned many times without the least danger to any part of the contents. Perched upon the centre of the narrow vehicle sits the driver, his feet resting on the runner of the sledge, ready at a moment's notice to jump off. Immediately behind our drivers, Mr. Kosmin and myself sat perched, much in the same manner, likewise ready every moment to jump off, in case of our carriages losing their balance. Although each sledge bore 25 pood, yet it glided so easily over the frozen snow, that a man could have pushed it along with one hand; accordingly, the dogs, when the way was good, would run their ten or twelve vershs in the hour."

The great inconvenience which attends this kind of traveling, consists in the difficulty of carrying a stock of food for the dogs. Thus, on the present occasion, three of the sledges were occupied by the travellers and their luggage, while the remaining six were almost exclusively occupied by fish for their cattle. This difficulty M. von Wrangel found means to obviate in some measure by burying a portion of the provisions in the snow, for a supply when returning, after which he sent the empty sledges back, and thereby husbanded his means. On this his first journey, his magazines were found and pilfered by the bears, which placed the travellers and their dogs on exceedingly short commons on their return; but experience gradually taught them to make their snow cellars bear-proof, and in their subsequent excursions they almost invariably found their buried stores untouched.

The intense cold made it impossible for them to lay aside any part of their costume when preparing to make

themselves "comfortable" at night, and even when they were fortunate enough to find an abundant supply of wood, they still suffered so much from the cold that they were frequently obliged to rise two or three times before morning, and warm themselves by running and jumping a little in front of the tent. M. von Wrangel made it a point, however, every evening to change his stockings, and his companion, M. Kosmin, had nearly lost the use of his limbs by neglecting this prudent precaution. The second or third morning after their departure, this gentleman complained that his feet were frozen. He was advised to change his stockings, which he had not done for two nights. "But when he pulled off his boots," says M. von Wrangel, "what was our horror at seeing his stockings frozen fast to his feet. With the utmost caution we proceeded to relieve him from this painful situation, in doing which we found complete strata of ice of perhaps the tenth of an inch in thickness, within his stockings. Fortunately the feet themselves were not frozen, and after we had gently rubbed them with brandy for some time, he was completely restored." M. Kosmin was a Russian sailor, he it remembered, and surely it must have required all the iron constitution of his race, to enable him to overcome this little inconvenience with such perfect facility. The quantity of furs in which it was necessary for the travellers to encase themselves, made it of course impossible for the vapour thrown off by the skin to escape. This always occasioned moisture to collect about the feet during the day, and made it highly imprudent to pass a night without first taking care to secure the comfort of dry stockings.

The chronometers were perfectly useless, as it was impossible to protect them against the influence of the cold. M. von Wrangel carried them next his person during the day, and carefully took them to bed with him at night, cherishing them with all the fondness of a bridegroom. But all would not do. The delicate creature could not live in a temperature of 40 degrees below the freezing point of Reaumur; the drop of oil within the works, was converted into ice.

The two following winters were employed by our author in vain attempts to proceed northward, in search of the polar continent, the existence of which had long been an enigma, and which even the labours of this expedition can scarcely be said to have solved. At an inconsiderable distance from the coast, even during the most intense frost, the ice was always found so thin that the sledge was continually in danger of breaking through, a catastrophe that befel them on one or two occasions, though without any serious consequence. Beyond this thin crust of ice, as far as the eye could reach, the sea was always open; but the horizon was seldom extensive, constant vapours issuing from the *Polinya*, as the open region of the ocean is called by the Siberians. Even in the severest winter the ice never extends more than 25 versts (16 English miles) to the north of the island of New Siberia,\* and it is evident, from the experience of the past, that neither in sledges, nor in ships sailing from the Siberian rivers, can any important results be obtained from future attempts to explore the Polar Sea. M. Von Wrangel appears to abandon the hope that other navigators may be more fortunate than himself. It may seem presumptuous for landsmen like ourselves to hazard a contrary opinion; but while we were accompanying our Russian in his dreary excursions over the polar ice, we confess, the idea frequently suggested itself to our minds that his own remarks pointed

out the only practicable means of reaching a more northern latitude. The impediment to his own progress (and the same remark applies to Lieutenant Anjou, who was employed on a similar service, on a more westerly part of the coast) was always the open *Polinya*, in which very little drift ice was seen. The point therefore to be attained, is to get a vessel afloat on the *Polinya*. Every attempt to do this by sailing from the ports of continental Asia has hitherto failed; but it remains to be shown whether a vessel built on the northern coast of one of the Lachoff Islands (on Kotelnoi or New Siberia, for instance) might not be more successful. Even in the most severe winter, we have seen, the ice extends only sixteen miles to the north of these islands. Might it not then be possible for an officer to avail himself of the brief summer months, when the ice breaks up, to work his way through these sixteen miles? Once in the open water, he would have a fair field before him, and a few months' sailing might finally dispose of the long pending question relative to the existence of a large Polar land.

Russia has greater means at her command for the solution of this question than any other country; but there are no political impediments to exclude Englishmen from a participation in the enterprise. The expedition undertaken by Messrs. Simpson and Deane, along the north-western coast of America, points out the only quarter within the British dominions from which farther attempts can advantageously be made, and the experience of Messrs. Anjou and Von Wrangel indicates the means that must be employed to obtain satisfactory results from those attempts. Some convenient locality might be selected near the mouth of the Mackenzie river. Abundant supplies of every kind could be forwarded thither during the summer, and in the winter means might be taken to ascertain, in sledges drawn by dogs, how far the solid ice extends to the north of the American continent. The dog alone appears adapted for this kind of service, for the heavier horse or reindeer would fall through the thin ice, over which the dog passes with complete impunity; and experience has taught the natives of Siberia, that the dog is quite as applicable to the purposes of draught as any other animal, provided care be taken not to impose upon him labour beyond his strength. In a high northern latitude, indeed, even the reindeer is at a disadvantage when compared with the dog, for not only does the reindeer sink farther into the snow, besides breaking through the ice when thin, but the food for the reindeer is not so easily conveyed from place to place. We throw out these suggestions with perfect diffidence, and leave it to those better qualified for the task to inquire farther into the practicability of the plan. In the mean time, let us, for a brief space, return to our adventurous author.

The journey northward, over the ice, was an undertaking of a far more serious nature than the little trip along the coast, with which M. von Wrangel had whiled away a portion of his first winter. He was now about to venture "out to sea," and had to prepare for even greater hardships than he had yet experienced. In the first place, drift wood he could scarcely hope to fall in with, and as only a small supply of so bulky an article could be admitted on the sledges, a warm fire was not to be thought of before his return to land. The only fuel taken with him was for the purpose of boiling water and making soup; and as soon as the cooking was at an end every spark of fire was extinguished, and the fragments of wood carefully replaced on the sledges. A Cossack belonging to the expedition was especially appointed to this part of the service. "He had to collect every splinter that fell on one side when the men were chopping up a log, and it was his business to see that no more was used than was absolutely necessary." The same extreme care and frugality was put into practice in the

\* This leaves still 15° to the North Pole, and about 12° southing from the pole, giving 27° for the *Polinya*, or open watery expanse, which certainly appears large, and is probably studded with islands, or contains a large polar land.



distribution of the provisions; all the bones and remnants of fish and meat were gathered together after each meal, and for the due discharge of this part of the service, another special appointment was deemed requisite. A scanty supply of food and firewood was not, however, the only inconvenience with which the party had to contend. The sun's rays reflected from the dazzling surface of the snow were soon found to act most painfully, and before many days were over, every man was suffering from violent inflammation of the eyes. M. von Wrangel and his friends obtained relief by rubbing the suffering parts with spirit, and then covering their faces with veils of black crape. The sledge drivers had recourse to a more violent remedy, and one that few will feel disposed to venture upon: they threw snuff into their eyes, "from which they suffered the most acute pain during the night, but were evidently much relieved on the following morning." Eventually, M. von Wrangel, to lessen this the most serious inconvenience to which this kind of service exposed him, adopted the plan of traveling chiefly by night, and resting during the middle of the day.

An occasional bear-hunt, by the excitement and exercise to which it led, varied the monotony of their occupation, but for the most part the bears were frightened by the presence of so large a number of dogs, and seldom came within speaking distance. A successful chase, by furnishing a fresh stock of food for the dogs, was always a cause of rejoicing; if, on the other hand, the quarry got off, the party were doubly disappointed, first by the loss of the bear, and secondly by the exhaustion of dogs and men, which made it impossible to proceed much farther for that day.

Easter day is a solemn festival throughout the whole Christian world, but nowhere is it more solemnly celebrated than in Russia. Our author shows that even on the broad ice of the Frozen Ocean it is quite possible to mark the return of a particular day, by rendering it the honour due.

"Unprovided with every requisite for such a solemnity, we wished at least to unite in prayer at the same hour with our countrymen at home. A block of ice was carved and hewn with much care into the shape of an altar. Upon this was placed a picture of St. Nicholas, the worker of miracles, and before it we erected a staff, on which burnt the only wax light we possessed. M. Bereshnoi officiated as priest, and read the prescribed service of the day, while our Cossacks and sledge-drivers raised the choral hymn. Simple and unadorned as was our temple, the piety of the little congregation was sincere, and, I may say, edifying. The festive banquet that followed was equally unpretending, consisting chiefly of some reindeer tongues,\* reserved for the occasion, and a double allowance of brandy. What contributed more than any thing else, however, to the cheerfulness of the day, was the extravagance in which we indulged, of not letting our fire go out. It was a moderate one, to be sure, but we all crept closely around it, and spent the remainder of the day, chatting sociably over the hardships and dangers we had passed, and the hope we all entertained of a safe return. No assembly was perhaps ever so cheerful and merry under similar circumstances, destitute as we were of every thing that could in the most remote degree be construed into convenience or enjoyment. Our chief comfort was, no doubt, our little blazing fire—a comfort of which we had so long been forced to deprive ourselves."

We have left ourselves no space to speak of the sum-

\* Mr. Latham informs us that the tongues we are in the habit of eating with the most unsuspecting innocence in this country under this appellation, are prepared from donkeys,

mer excursions which M. von Wrangel and his officers undertook, chiefly on horseback, through the surrounding country, or we would here introduce some of his animated descriptions of the reindeer hunting and wild goose catching, which we have read with interest, and which nothing but the length to which our remarks have already extended prevents us from quoting. His fourth winter was devoted to his great and last tour on the ice, which he extended as far as the island of Kolitskin, the same as that discovered by Captain Cook, and entered on his chart as Burney's Isle. On this tour it was that our travellers entered into friendly relations with the Tshuktshi, of whom one accompanied them a considerable portion of the journey, in his reindeer sledge. The Tshuktshi still persist, in what they have always maintained, that there exists a large extent of land to the north of their own country; and an old chief even declared that on a fine summer day, from some rocks situated a little westward from Captain Cook's North Cape, he had frequently discerned mountains covered with snow, at a great distance from land.

"But in winter, he said, the eye could not reach so far, and nothing was then to be seen. In former times, he added, large herds of reindeer had sometimes arrived across the sea, probably from that northern land, but, having been hunted and scared by the Tsheskoeks and the wolves, had always returned again. He himself had once, in April, seen a herd thus returning, and had followed it a whole day in his sledge, but the ice became so uneven, that he was obliged to give up the pursuit. In his opinion, those mountains did not form part of an island, but of an extensive region, like the Tshesko land. His father had told him, that once upon a time, one of their elders had gone thither, with some of his men, in leathern *baydara*, or boats, but what they had found there, or whether they had ever returned, he was unable to say. He asserted most positively, however, that the country was inhabited; and, as a proof, he added, that a whale, wounded by spears pointed with stones, had a few years since been thrown up their coast. Now as none of the Tsheskoeks used such spears, the whale could have been wounded only by one of the inhabitants of the unknown land."

The argument about the spear is one of very little value, as it is known that on the north western coast of America, and more particularly on the islands about Behring's Strait, such spears are still used. The old chief, however, appears to have been an intelligent observer, for in the course of his conversation with M. von Wrangel, to make his explanations more clear, he took up a piece of charred wood, and drew a tolerably correct map of the whole line of coast, from the Baranikha to the North Cape, marking all the most important islands, capes, bays, &c. In fact so proverbial are the Tshuktshi for their cheerfulness and readiness of apprehension, that the Siberian Russians have long designated them as the "Frenchmen of the Tundra."

During this his last journey, M. von Wrangel again attempted to get to the north, but the same natural impediments again opposed his progress, and before he could return to the coast, a violent tempest came on, which broke the ice, and left the whole party afloat on a fragment of about fifty fathoms in diameter, on which they spent a night of painful anxiety, thrown to and fro by the billows of the ocean, and in momentary expectation of seeing their little island crushed by the enormous *torossy*, or icebergs, which were dashing about in all directions around them. As soon, however, as the storm subsided, the several fields of ice became quickly connected, and the adventurous travellers were enabled to proceed on their journey, which, notwithstanding the

danger they had just escaped, they continued in a north-easterly direction. They experienced a second storm, and were again set adrift on the ocean, but this time the fragment was of a much larger size, being composed of a number of connected icebergs. To return to the "continental ice" they had to construct a kind of bridge with loose blocks of ice, and again they renewed their endeavours to proceed to the north. "We did so," says our author—

"Rather for the satisfaction of knowing that we had left nothing undone that it was in our power to do, than with any hope of a favourable result. Till noon (23d March) we had clear weather, with a light wind, which towards the afternoon became sharp, when clouds began to gather over us, while from N. W. to N. E., as far as our eyes could reach, the horizon was covered by the dense blue vapour which in these regions constantly rises from the open ocean. Notwithstanding this sure token of the impossibility of proceeding much farther, we continued to go due north for about nine versts, when we arrived at the edge of an immense break in the ice, which reached in both directions beyond our visible horizon, and which at the narrowest part was more than 150 fathoms broad. The sharp westerly wind we could see was widening the gap, and the current that set towards the east was running at the rate of a knot and a half. We climbed to the summit of one of the loftiest icebergs, whence we obtained an extensive view towards the north, and whence we beheld the wide immeasurable ocean spread before our gaze. It was a dreadful, melancholy, magnificent spectacle! On the foaming waves were tossed about, as though they had been mere feathers, icebergs of enormous size; the grotesque and colossal masses lay one moment inclined on the agitated waters, and the next were hurled with awful violence against the edge of the standing ice. The collisions were so tremendous that large fragments were every instant broken away, and it was evident that the rampart of ice which still divided the channel before us from the open ocean would soon be completely destroyed. It would have been idle temerity to have attempted to ferry ourselves across, upon one of the floating pieces of ice, for we should not have found firm footing on our arrival. Even on our own side fresh breaks were continually forming, which assumed the forms of rivers rushing in different directions through a continent of ice. We could not go further!

"With a painful feeling of the impossibility of overcoming the obstacles which Nature opposed to us, our last hope vanished of discovering the enigmatical land, of the existence of which it was still not allowed us to doubt. We saw ourselves compelled to renounce the object for which during three years we had constantly exposed ourselves to every kind of hardship, privation, and danger. We had done all that duty or honour could demand from us; it would have been absurd to have attempted to contend against the might of the elements, and I resolved to return!

"According to my reckoning, the point from which I returned was situated in  $70^{\circ} 51'$  N. latitude, and  $175^{\circ} 27'$  E. longitude, from Greenwich. Our distance from the main land, in a straight line, was 103 versts. On sounding we found  $22\frac{1}{2}$  fathoms of water, with a clay bottom."

On their return they had to ferry themselves across many fresh breaks in the ice, the dogs swimming, and towing after them the pieces of ice on which the sledges rested. In many places the old track of their sledges was interrupted by large *torossy*, a proof that the storms they had experienced must have broken the ice to a great extent behind them. They were again overtaken by a

storm, were again set adrift upon an iceberg, to which they were a whole day indebted for their preservation. At length, however, their frost-built vessel became a prey to the hurricane. The mighty *toross* was hurled against the field of standing ice, and the violence of the collision shattered at once the mass that bore our travellers, and the mass against which it had been flung.

"The moment of our destruction was at hand. But at this dreadful moment, when escape seemed impossible, the native instinct of every living being acted within us. All of us at the same instant sprang upon the sledges, and urged our dogs to their full speed without knowing whither we went. The animals flew across the sinking fragments, and reached a field of standing ice, where they immediately ceased running, conscious apparently that the danger was over. We were saved. Joyfully we embraced one another, and joined in thanks to God for our miraculous preservation."

And here we must close our notice of one of the most attractive works of the kind that has for some years passed through our hands. The expeditions we have described embrace from longitude  $67^{\circ}$  east to  $175^{\circ}$  east, the immense sweep of  $108^{\circ}$  of east longitude in the highest attainable Asiatic latitude, bringing us to Behring's Strait from the distant Ob. Here our distinguished countrymen, Captain Beechey, meets us, and carries us on the American continent until stopped by the same impediments with Von Wrangel, but with his points of survey of a far more accurate description. Inferior only to the late deeply lamented Captain Kater, receivedly the best manipulator of instruments of his time, far exceeding even the late astronomer royal, whose excellence on that point is well known, all Capt. Beechey's observations are of the highest possible accuracy. The American coast will soon, we trust, be perfectly ascertained from Point Parry to Point Beechey. Whether a large Polar land extends beyond these discoveries, will soon form the only remaining northern desideratum. In conclusion we have simply to remark, that we are at a loss to comprehend the motive of the Russian government in keeping M. Von Wrangel's narrative buried for so many years in the archives of the admiralty. The public, we are sure, will feel indebted to Mr. Ritter, of Berlin, for the German version, and we presume some of our own publishers will, before long, present the work to us in an English dress.

With respect to the extraordinary details in this article on the mammoth bones, one of our most eminent geologists has stated to us his conviction that the diminution of the mammoth in size, as we approach the North Pole, is untrue. He considers that different species are confounded. The quantity of these remains does not surprise him, as bones in similar proportion are found along the north shores of Asia and America. The temperature of the earth, he conceives, must have essentially changed. The mammoth was a hot-blooded herbivorous animal, and not adapted to a marine life. We subjoin these remarks, which are of high moment, we conceive, and lead to speculations on change of climate, soil, &c. almost endless. The fidelity of Hedenström is of course not impeached, even supposing him to be in error.

From Blackwood's Magazine.

## TEN THOUSAND A-YEAR.

(Continued.)

While the lofty door of a house in Grosvenor Street was yet quivering under the shock of previously-announced dinner-arrival, one of the servants who were standing behind a carriage which approached from the direction of Piccadilly, slipped off, and in a twinkling, with a thun-thun-thunder-under, thunder-runder-runder, thun-thun-thun! and a shrill thrilling whirr of the bell, announced the arrival of the Duke of —, the last guest. It was a large and plain carriage, but perfectly well known; and before the door of the house at which it had drawn up, had been opened, displaying some four or five servants standing in the hall, in simple but elegant liveries, half-a-dozen passengers had stopped to see get out of the carriage an elderly, middle-sized man, with a somewhat spare figure, dressed in plain black clothes, with iron-gray hair, and a countenance which, once seen, was not to be forgotten. That was a great man; one, the like of whom many previous centuries had not seen; whose name shot terror into the hearts of all the enemies of old England all over the world, and fond pride and admiration into the hearts of his fellow-countrymen.

"A quarter to eleven!" he said, in a quiet tone, to the servant who was holding open the carriage door—while the bystanders took off their hats; a courtesy which he acknowledged, as he slowly stepped across the pavement, by touching his hat in a mechanical sort of way with his forefinger. The house-door then closed upon him; the handful of on-lookers passed away; off rolled the empty carriage; and all without was quiet as before. The house was that of Mr. Aubrey, one of the members for the burgh of Yatton, in Yorkshire,—a man of rapidly-rising importance in parliament. Surely his was a pleasant position—that of an independent country gentleman, with a clear, unincumbered rent-roll of ten thousand a-year, and already become the spokesman of his class! Parliament having been assembled, in consequence of a particular emergency, at a much earlier period than usual, the house of commons, in which Mr. Aubrey had the evening before delivered a well-timed and powerful speech, had adjourned for the Christmas recess, the house of lords, being about to follow its example that evening: an important division, however, being first expected to take place at a late hour. Mr. Aubrey was warmly complimented on his success by several of the select and brilliant circle then assembled, and who were in high spirits—ladies and all—on account of a considerable triumph just obtained by their party, and to which Mr. Aubrey was assured, by even the Duke of —, his exertions had certainly not a little contributed. While his grace was energetically intimating to Mr. Aubrey his opinion to this effect, there were two lovely women listening to him with intense eagerness—they were the wife and sister of Mr. Aubrey. The former was an elegant and interesting woman, of nearly eighty-and-twenty; the latter was a really beautiful girl, somewhere between twenty and twenty-one. She was dressed with the utmost degree of simplicity that was consistent with elegance. Mrs. Aubrey, a blooming young mother of two as charming children as were to be met with in a day's walk all over both the parks, was, in character and manners, all pliancy and gentleness; about Miss Aubrey there was a dash of spirit that gave an infinite zest to

her beauty. Her blue eyes beamed with the richest expression of feeling—in short, Catharine Aubrey was, both in face and figure, a downright English beauty; and she knew—truth must be told—that such she appeared to the great duke, whose cold aquiline eye she often felt to be settled upon her with satisfaction. The fact was, that he had penetrated at a first glance beneath the mere surface of an arch, sweet, and winning manner, and detected a certain strength of character in Miss Aubrey which gave him more than usual interest in her, and spread over his iron-cast features a pleasant expression, relaxing their sternness. It might indeed be said, that before her, in his person,

"Grim-visaged war had smooth'd his wrinkled front."

'Twas a subject for a painter, that delicate and blooming girl, her auburn hair hanging in careless grace on each side of her white forehead, while her eyes were fixed with absorbed interest on the stern and rigid countenance which she reflected had been, as it were, a thousand times darkened with the smoke of the grisly battlefield. But I must not forget that there are others in the room; and amongst them, standing at a little distance, is Lord De la Zouch, one of Mr. Aubrey's neighbours in Yorkshire. Apparently he is listening to a brother peer talking to him very earnestly about the expected division; but Lord De la Zouch's eye is fixed on you, lovely Kate—and how little can you imagine what is passing through his mind! It has just occurred to him that his sudden arrangement for young Delamere—his only son and heir, come up the day before from Oxford—to call for him about half-past ten, and take his place in Mrs. Aubrey's drawing-room, while he, Lord De la Zouch, goes down to the house—may be attended with certain consequences. He is speculating on the effect of your beauty bursting suddenly on his son—who has not seen you for nearly two years; all this gives him anxiety—but not painful anxiety—for, dear Kate, he knows that your forehead would wear the ancient coronet of the De la Zouches with grace and dignity. But Delamere is as yet too young—and if he gets the image of Catharine Aubrey into his head, it will, fears his father, instantly cast into the shade and displace all the stern visages of those old poets, orators, historians, philosophers and statesmen, who ought, in Lord De la Zouch and his son's tutor's judgment, to occupy exclusively the head of the aforesaid Delamere for some five years to come. That youngster—happy fellow!—frank, high-spirited, and enthusiastic—and handsome to boot—was heir to an ancient title and great estates; all he had considered in looking out for an alliance was—youth, health, beauty, blood—here they all were;—*fortune*—bah! what did it signify to his son—but it's not to be thought of for some years.

"Suppose," said he aloud, though in a musing manner, "one were to say—twenty-four,"—

"*Twenty-four!*" echoed the Earl of St. Clair with amazement, "my dear Lord De la Zouch, what do you mean? Eighty-four at the very lowest."

"Eh! what! oh—yes, of course—I should say ninety—I mean—hem!—they will muster about twenty-four only."

"Yes, there you're right, I dare say." Here the announcement of dinner put an end to the colloquy of the two statesmen. Lord De la Zouch led down Miss Aubrey with an air of the most delicate and cordial courtesy; and felt almost disposed, in the heat of the moment, to tell her that he had arranged all in his own mind—that

she was to be the future Lady De la Zouch. He was himself the eleventh who had come to the title in direct descent from father to son; 'twas a point he was not a little nervous and anxious about—he detested collateral succession—and he made himself infinitely agreeable to Miss Aubrey as he sat beside her at dinner. The Duke of — sat on the right hand side of Mrs. Aubrey, seemingly in high spirits, and she appeared proud enough of her supporter. It was a delightful dinner-party, elegant without ostentation, and select without pretence of exclusiveness. All were cheerful and animated, not merely on account of the over-night's parliamentary victory, which I have already alluded to, but also in contemplation of the coming Christmas; how, and where, and with whom each was to spend that "right merrie season," being the chief topic of conversation. As there was nothing peculiar in the dinner, and as I have no time for describing such matters in detail—the clatter of plate, the jingling of silver, the sparkling of wines, and so forth—I shall request the reader to imagine himself led by me quietly out of the dining-room into the library—thus escaping from all the bustle and hubbub attendant upon such an entertainment as is going on in the front of the house. We shall be alone in the library—here it is; we enter it, and shut the door. 'Tis a spacious room, all the sides covered with books, of which Mr. Aubrey is a great collector—and the clear red fire (which we must presently replenish or it will go out) is shedding a subdued ruddy light on all the objects in the room, very favourable for our purpose. The ample table is covered with books and papers; and there is an antique-looking arm-chair drawn opposite to the fire, in which Mr. Aubrey has been indulging in a long reverie till the moment of quitting it to go and dress for dinner. This chair I shall sit in myself; you may draw out from the recess for yourself, one of two little sloping easy-chairs, which have been placed there by Mrs. and Miss Aubrey for their own sole use, considering that they are excellent judges of the period at which Mr. Aubrey has been long engaged alone, and at which they should come in and gossip with him. We may as well draw the dusky green curtains across the window, through which the moon shines at present rather too brightly.—So, now, after coaxing up the fire—I will proceed to tell you a little bit of pleasant family history.

The Aubreys are a Yorkshire family. Their residence, Yatton, is in the northeastern part of the county, not above fifteen or twenty miles from the sea. The hall is one of those old structures, the sight of which throws you back nearly a couple of centuries in our English history. It stands in a park, crowded with trees, many of them of great age and size, and under which some two hundred head of deer perform their capricious and graceful gambols. You strike off the great North road into a broad by-way; after going down which for about a mile, you come to a straggling little village called Yatton, at the further extremity of which stands an aged gray church, with a very tall thin spire; an immense yew-tree, with a kind of friendly gloom, overshadowing, in the little churchyard, nearly half the graves. A little behind the church is the vicarage-house, snug and sheltered by a line of fir-trees. After walking on about eighty yards, you come to the high park-gates, and see a lodge just within, on the left hand side, sheltered by an elm-tree. You then wind your way for about a third of a mile along a gravel walk, amongst the thickening trees, till you come to a ponderous old crumbling-looking red brick gateway of the time of Henry VII., with one or

two deeply-set stone windows in the turrets, and mouldering stone-capped battlements peeping through high-climbing ivy. There is an old escutcheon immediately over the point of the arch; and as you pass underneath, if you look up you can see the groove of the old portcullis still remaining. Having passed under this castellated remnant, you enter a kind of court, formed by a high wall completely covered with ivy, running along in a line from the right hand turret of the gateway till it joins the house. Along its course are a number of yew-trees. In the centre of the open space is a quaintly disposed grass-plot, dotted about with stunted box, and in the centre stands a weatherbeaten stone sundial. The house itself is a large irregular pile of dull red brick-work, with great stacks of chimneys in the rear; the body of the building had evidently been erected at different times. Some part is evidently in the style of Queen Elizabeth's reign, another in that of Queen Anne: and it is plain that on the site of the present structure has formerly stood a castle. There are traces of the old moat still visible round the rear of the house. One of the ancient towers, with small deep stone windows, still remains, giving its venerable support to the right-hand extremity of the building. The long frontage of the house consists of two huge masses of dusky-red brick-work, (you can hardly call them *wings*,) connected together by a lower building in the centre, which contains the hall. There are three or four rows of long thin deep windows, with heavy-looking wooden sashes. The high-pitched roof is of slate, and has deep projecting eaves, forming, in fact, a bold wooden cornice running along the whole length of the building, which is some two or three stories high. At the left extremity stands a clump of ancient cedars of Lebanon, feathering in evergreen beauty down to the ground. The hall is large and lofty; the floor is of polished oak, almost the whole of which is covered with thick matting; it is waincoted all round with black oak, some seven or eight full-length pictures, evidently of considerable antiquity, being let into the panels. Quaint figures these are to be sure; and if they resembled the ancestors of the Aubrey family, those ancestors must have been singular and startling persons! The faces are quite white and staring—all as if in wonder; and they have such long legs, ending in sharp-pointed shoes—just such as were worn in the reign of Edward III., or even Richard II. On each side of the ample fireplace stands a figure in full armour; and there are also ranged along the wall old swords and lances, the very idea of wielding and handling which makes your arms ache, while you exclaim, "they *must* have been giants in those days!" On one side of this hall, a door opens into the dining-room, beyond which is the library; on the other side a door leads you into a noble room, now called the drawing-room, where stands a very fine organ. Out of both the dining-room and drawing-room, you pass up a staircase contained in an old square tower, two sides of each of them opening on the old quadrangle, lead into a gallery running all round the quadrangle, and into which all the bed-rooms open.—But I need not go into further detail. Altogether it is truly a fine old mansion. Its only constant occupant is Mrs. Aubrey, the mother of Mr. Aubrey, in whose library we are now seated. She is a widow, having survived her husband, who twice was one of the county members about fifteen years. Mr. Aubrey is her firstborn child, Miss Aubrey her last: four intervening children she has followed to the grave,—the grief and suffering consequent upon which have sadly shaken her constitution, and made



her, both in actual health and in appearance, at least ten years older than she really is—for she has, in point of fact, not long since entered her sixtieth year. What a blessed life she leads at Yatton! Her serene and cheerful temper makes every one happy about her; and her charity is unbounded, but dispensed with a most just discrimination. One way or another, almost a fourth of the village are direct pensioners upon her bounty. You have only to mention the name of Madam Aubrey, the lady of Yatton, to witness involuntary homage paid to her virtues. Her word is law; and well indeed it may be. While Mr. Aubrey, her husband, was to the last stern in his temper, and reserved in his habits, bearing withal a spotless and lofty character, she was always what she still is, meek, gentle, accessible, charitable, and pious. On his death she withdrew from the world, and has ever since resided at Yatton—never having quitted it for a single day. There are in the vicinity one or two stately families, with ancient name, sounding title, and great possessions; but for ten miles round Yatton, old Madam Aubrey, the squire's mother, is the name that is enshrined in people's kindest and most grateful feelings, and receives their readiest homage. 'Tis perhaps a very small matter to mention, but there is at the hall a great white old mare, Peggy, that for these twenty years, in all weathers, hath been the bearer of Madam's bounty. A thousand times hath she carried Jacob Jones (now a pensioned servant, whose hair is as white as Peggy's) all over the estate, and also oft beyond it, with comfortable matters for the sick and poor. Most commonly there are a couple of stone bottles, filled with crowslip, currant, ginger, or elderberry wine, slung before old Jones over the well-worn saddle—to the carrying of which Peggy has got so accustomed that she does not go comfortably without them. She has so fallen into the habits of old Jones, who is an inveterate gossip, (Madam having helped to make him such by the numerous inquiries she makes of him every morning as to every one in the village, and on the estate, and which inquiries he must have the means of answering,) that slow as she jogs along, if ever she meets or is overtaken by any one, she stops of her own accord, as if to hear what they and her rider have to say to one another. She is a great favourite with all, and gets a mouthful of hay or grass at every place she stops at, either from the children or the old people. When old Peggy comes to die, she will be missed by all the folk round Yatton. Madam Aubrey, growing, I am sorry to say, very feeble, cannot go about as much as she used, and betakes herself oftener and oftener to the old family coach; and when she is going to drive about the neighbourhood, you may always see it stop at the vicarage for old Dr. Tatham, who generally accompanies her. On these occasions she always has a bag containing Testaments and prayer-books, which are distributed as rewards to those whom the parson can recommend as deserving of them. For these five-and-twenty years she has never missed giving a copy of each to every child in the village and on the estate, on its being confirmed; and the old lady looks round very keenly every Sunday, from her pew, to see that these Bibles and prayer-books are reverently used. I could go on for an hour and longer, telling you these and other such matters of this exemplary lady; but we shall by and by have some opportunities of seeing and knowing more of her personally. In manner she is very calm, and quiet, and dignified. She looks all that you could expect from what I have told you. The briskness of youth, the sedate firmness of middle-age, have years

since given place, as you will see with some pain, to the feebleness produced by ill health and mental suffering—for she mourned after her children with all a fond and bereaved mother's love. Oh! how she doats upon her surviving son and daughter! And are they not worthy of such a mother? Mr. Aubrey is in his thirty-sixth year; and inherits the mental qualities of both his parents—the demeanour and person of his father. He has a reserve that is not cynical, but only diffident, yet it gives him, at least at first sight, an air of hauteur, if not austerity, which is very far from his real nature, for within is, indeed, the rich "milk of human kindness." He has the soft heart and benignant temper of his mother, joined with the masculine firmness of character which belonged to his father. Sensitive he is, perhaps to a fault. There is a tone of melancholy or pensiveness in his composition, which has probably increased upon him from his severe studies, ever since his youth. He is a man of superior intellect, though not, perhaps, of the highest or most brilliant order; and is a most capital scholar. At Oxford he plucked the prize from a host of strong competitors, and has since justified the expectations which were entertained of him. He has made several really valuable contributions to historic literature—indeed, I think he is even now engaged upon some researches calculated to throw much light upon the obscure origin of several of our political institutions. He has entered upon politics with uncommon ardour—perhaps with an excessive ardour. I think he is likely to make a considerable figure in parliament; for he is a man of very clear head, very patient, of business-like habits, and, moreover, has a very impressive delivery as a public speaker. He is generous and charitable as his admirable mother, and careless, even to a fault, of his pecuniary interests. He is a man of perfect simplicity and purity of character. Above all, his virtues are the virtues which have been sublimed by Christianity—the cold embers of morality warmed into religion. He stands happily equidistant from infidelity and fanaticism. He has looked for light from above, and has heard a voice saying—"This is the way, walk thou in it." His piety is the real source of that happy consistent dignity, and content, and firmness which have earned him the respect of all who know him, and will bear him through whatever may befall him. He who standeth upon this rock cannot be moved, perhaps not even touched, by the surges of worldly circumstances of difficulty and distress. In manner Mr. Aubrey is calm and gentlemanlike; in person he is rather above the middle height, and of slight make—too slight, perhaps, to be elegant. From the way in which his clothes hang about him, a certain sharpness at his shoulders catching the eye of an observer—you would feel an anxiety about his health, which would be increased by hearing of the mortality in his family; and your thoughts are perhaps pointed in the same direction, by a glance at his long, thin, delicate, white hands. His countenance, though not to be called handsome, has a serene manliness about it when in repose, and an acuteness and vivacity when animated, which are delightful to behold: it often beams with energy and intellect. His hair is black as jet, and his forehead ample and marked.

Mr. Aubrey has been married about six years; 'twas a case of love at first sight. Chance threw him in the way of Agnes St. Clair, within a few weeks after she had been bereaved of her only parent, Colonel St. Clair, who fell in the Peninsular war. Had he lived only a month or two longer, he would have succeeded to a considerable estate; as it was, he left his only child com-

paratively penniless—but heaven had endowed her with personal beauty, with a lovely disposition, and superior understanding. It was not till after a long and anxious wooing, backed by the cordial entreaties of Mrs. Aubrey, that Miss St. Clair consented to become the wife of a man, who, to this hour, loves her with all the passionate ardour with which she had first inspired him. And richly she deserves his love, for she dotes upon him, she studies, or rather perhaps anticipates, his every wish; in short, had the whole sex been searched for one calculated to make happy the morbidly-fastidious Aubrey, the choice must surely have fallen on Miss St. Clair; a woman whose temper, whose tastes, and whose manners were at once in delicate and harmonising unison and contrast with his own. She has hitherto brought him but two children, a boy between four and five years old, and a girl about two years old. If I were to hint my own impressions, I should say there was a probability—but be that as it may, 'tis an affair we have nothing to do with at present.

Of Catharine Aubrey you had a momentary moon-light glimpse, at a former period of this history; and you have seen her this evening under other, and perhaps not less interesting circumstances. Now, where have you beheld a more exquisite specimen of budding womanhood?—but I feel that I shall get extravagant if I begin to dwell upon her charms. You have seen her—judge for yourself; but you do not *know* her as I do; and I shall tell you that her personal beauty is but a faint emblem of the beauties of her mind and character. She is Aubrey's youngest—his only sister; and he cherishes her with the tenderness and fondest regard. Neither he, nor his mother—with both of whom she spends her time alternately—can bear to part with her for ever so short an interval. She is the gay, romping playmate of the little Aubreys; the demure secretary and treasurer of her mother. I say *demure*—for there is a sly humour and archness in Kate's composition, which flickers about even her gravest moods. She is calculated equally for the seclusion of Yatton, and the splendid atmosphere of Almack's; but for the latter she seems at present to have little inclination. Kate is a girl of decided character, of strong sense, of high principle; all of which are irradiated, not overborne, by her sparkling vivacity of temperament. She has real talent; and her mind has been trained, and her tastes directed, with affectionate skill and vigilance by her gifted mother. She has many accomplishments; but the only one I shall choose here to name is—music. She was a girl to sing and play before a man of the most fastidious taste and genius. I defy any man to hear the rich tones of Miss Aubrey's voice without being exquisitely moved. Music is with her a matter not of *art*, but of *feeling*—of passionate feeling; but hark!—hush!—surely—yes, that is Miss Aubrey's voice, I will be sworn—that is her clear and brilliant touch; the ladies have ascended to the drawing-room, and we must presently follow them. How time has passed! I had a great deal more to tell you about the family, but we must take some other opportunity.

Yes, it is Miss Aubrey, playing on the new and superb piano given by her brother last week to Mrs. Aubrey. Do you see with what a careless grace and ease she is giving a very sweet but difficult composition of Haydn? The lady who is standing by her to turn over her music, is the celebrated Countess of Lydsdale. She is still young and beautiful; but beside Miss Aubrey what a painful contrast! 'Tis all the difference between an arti-

ficial and a natural flower. Poor Lady Lydsdale! you are not happy with all your splendour; the glitter of your diamonds cannot compensate for the loss of the sparkling spirits of a younger day; they pale their ineffectual fires beside the fresh and joyous spirit of Catharine Aubrey. You sigh.

"Now I'll sing you quite a new thing," said Kate, starting up, and turning over her portfolio till she came to a sheet of paper, on which were some verses in her own handwriting: "The words were written by my brother, were not they, Agnes? and I have found an old ballad that exactly fits them!" Here her fingers, wandering lightly and softly over the keys, gave forth a beautiful symphony in the minor; after which, with exquisite simplicity, she sung the following:—

PEACE.

1.

Where, O where  
Hath gentle PEACE found rest?  
Builds she in bower of lady fair!  
But Love—he hath possession there;  
Not long is *she* the guest.

2.

Sits she crown'd  
Beneath a pictured dome?  
But there Ambition keeps his ground,  
And Fear and Envy skulk around;  
This cannot be her home!

3.

Will she hide  
In scholar's pensive cell?  
But *he* already hath his bride:  
Him, Melancholy sits beside—  
With her she may not dwell!

4.

Now and then,  
Peace, wandering, lays her head  
On regal couch, in captive's den—  
But nowhere finds she rest with men,  
Or only with the dead!

To these words, trembling on the beautiful lips of Miss Aubrey, was listening an unperceived auditor, with eyes devouring her every feature, and ears absorbing every tone of her thrilling voice. It was young Delamere, who had, only a moment or two before Miss Aubrey commenced singing the above lines, alighted from his father's carriage, which was then waiting at the door to carry off Lord De la Zouch to the house of lords. Arrested by the rich voice of the singer, he stopped short before he had entered the front drawing-room, and, stepping to a corner where he was hid from view, though he could distinctly see Miss Aubrey, there he remained as if rooted to the spot. He, too, had a soul for music; and the exquisite manner in which Miss Aubrey gave the last verse, called up before his excited fancy the vivid image of a dove fluttering with agitated uncertainty over the sea of human life, even like the dove over the waters enveloping the earth in olden time. The mournful minor into which she threw the last line, excited a heart susceptible of the liveliest emotions to a degree which it required some effort to control, and almost a tear to relieve. When Miss Aubrey had quitted

the piano, Mrs. Aubrey followed, and gave a very delicate sonata from Haydn. Then sat down Lady Lydsdale, and dashed off, in an exceedingly brilliant style, a *scena* from the new opera, which quickly reduced the excited feelings of Delamere to a pitch admitting of his presenting himself. While this lowering process was going on, Delamere took down a little volume from a cabinet of books immediately behind him, and which proved to be a volume of the *Fairy Queen*. He found many pencil-marks, evidently made by a light female hand; and turning to the fly-leaf, he beheld, in a small elegant hand, the name of "*Catharine Aubrey*." His heart fluttered; he turned towards the piano, and beheld the graceful figure of Miss Aubrey standing beside Lady Lydsdale, in an attitude of delighted earnestness—for her ladyship was undoubtedly a very splendid performer—totally unconscious of the burning eye that was fixed upon her. After gazing at her for some moments, he gently pressed the autograph to his lips; and solemnly vowed within himself, in the most deliberate manner possible, that if he could not marry Catharine Aubrey, he would never marry any body; he would, moreover, quit England for ever; and deposit a broken heart in a foreign grave—and so forth. Thus calmly resolved—or rather to such a resolution did his thoughts tend—that sedate person, the Honourable Geoffry Lovel Delamere. He was a high-spirited, frank-hearted fellow; and, like a good-natured fool, whom bitter knowledge of the world has not cooled down into contempt for a very considerable portion of it, trusted and loved almost every one whom he saw. At that moment there was only one person in the whole world that he hated, viz., the miserable individual—if any such there were—who might have happened to forestall him in the affections of Miss Aubrey. The bare idea made his breath come and go quickly, and his cheek flush. Why, he felt that he had a sort of right to Miss Aubrey's heart; for had they not been born, and had they not lived almost all their lives, within a few miles<sup>2</sup> of each other? Had they not often played together?—were not their family estates almost contiguous?—Delamere advanced into the room, assuming as unconcerned an air as he could; but he felt not a little tried when Miss Aubrey, on seeing him, gaily and frankly extended her hand to him, supposing him to have only the moment before entered the house. Poor Delamere's hand slightly quivered as he felt it clasping the soft lillied fingers of her whom he had thus resolved to make his wife: what would he not have given to have carried them to his lips! Now, if I were to say that in the course of that evening, Miss Aubrey did not form a kind of a sort of a faint notion of the possible state of matters with young Delamere, I should not be treating the reader with that eminent degree of candour for which I think he, or she, is at present disposed to give me credit. But Kate was deeply skilled in human nature, and settled the matter by one very just reflection, viz. that she was one year and seven months older than Delamere; and, therefore, that it was not likely that, &c. &c. &c. Besides, the son and heir of Lord De la Zouch—pooh!—pooh!—'tis a mere boy, at college—how ridiculous!—So she gave herself no trouble about the affair; exhibited no symptoms of caution or coyness, but laughed and sung, and talked, and played, just as if he had not been present.

He was a handsome young fellow, too.—

During the evening, Mr. Delamere took an opportunity of asking Miss Aubrey who wrote the verses which he pointed to, as they lay on the piano. The

handwriting, she said, was hers, but the verses were composed by her brother. He asked for the copy, with a slight trepidation. She readily gave it to him—he receiving it with (as he supposed) a mighty unconcerned air. He read it over that night, before getting into bed, at least six times; and it was the very first thing he looked at on getting out of bed in the morning. Now Miss Aubrey certainly wrote an elegant hand—but as for character, of course it had none. He could scarce have distinguished it from the handwriting of any of his sisters, or cousins, or friends:—How should he? All women are taught the same hard, angular uniform hand—but good, bad, or indifferent, this was *Kate Aubrey's* handwriting—and her pretty hand had rested on the paper while writing—that was enough. He resolved to turn the verses into every kind of Greek and Latin metre he knew of—

In short, that here was a "course of true love" opened, seems pretty evident; but whether it will "run smooth" is another matter.

Their guests having at length departed, Mr. Aubrey, his wife, and sister, sat before the fire gossiping over the events of the day for some twenty minutes, and then they rose to retire. He went, very sleepy, straight to his dressing-room; they to the nursery, to see how the children were going on, as far as they could learn from their drowsy attendants. Little Aubrey would have reminded you of one of the exquisite children's heads sketched by Reynolds or Lawrence, as he lay breathing imperceptibly, with his rich flowing hair spread upon the pillow, in which his face was partly hid and his arms stretched out. Mrs. Aubrey put her finger into one of his hands, which was half open, and which closed as it were instinctively upon it with a gentle pressure. "Look, Kate," softly whispered Mrs. Aubrey. Miss Aubrey leaned forward and kissed his little cheek with an ardour that almost awoke him. After a glance at a tiny head partly visible above the clothes, in an adjoining bed, and looking like a rose-bud half hid amongst the leaves, they withdrew.

"The little loves!—how one's heart thrills with looking at them!" said Miss Aubrey, as they descended. "Kate!" whispered Mrs. Aubrey, with an arch smile, as they stood at their respective chamber doors which adjoined. "Mr. Delamere is improved—is not he?—Ah, I understand."

"Agnes, how can you?"—hastily answered Miss Aubrey, with cheeks suddenly crimsoned. "I never heard such nonsense."

"Right, right, love, think over it!" said Mrs. Aubrey, and the next moment the blooming wife had entered her bedroom. Miss Aubrey slipped into her dressing-room, where Harriet, her maid, was sitting asleep before the fire. Her beautiful mistress did not for a few minutes awake her; but placing her candlestick on the toilet-table, stood in a musing attitude.

"It's so perfectly ridiculous," at length she said aloud, and up started her maid. Within a quarter of an hour Miss Aubrey was in bed, but by no means asleep.

The next morning, about eleven o'clock, Mr. Aubrey was seated in the library, in momentary expectation of his letters; and a few moments before the postman's rattat was heard, Mrs. and Miss Aubrey made their appearance, as was their wont, in expectation of any thing that might have upon the cover, in addition to the address—

"CHARLES AUBREY, Esq., M. P.," &c. &c. &c., the words, letters, or figures, "Mrs. Aubrey," or "Miss Aubrey," in the corner. In addition to this, it was not

an unpleasant thing to skim over the contents of *his* letters, as one by one he opened them, and laid them aside; for both these women were daughters of Eve, and inherited a *little* of her curiosity. Mr. Aubrey was always somewhat nervous and fidgety on such occasions, and wished them gone; but they only laughed at him, so he was fain to put up with them. On this morning there were more than Mr. Aubrey's usual number of letters; and in casting her eye over them, Mrs. Aubrey suddenly took up one that challenged attention; it bore a black seal, had a deep black bordering, and had the frank of Lord Alkmond, at whose house in Shropshire they had for months been engaged to spend the ensuing Christmas, and were intending to set off on their visit the very next day. The ominous missive was soon torn open; it was from Lord Alkmond himself, who in a few hurried lines announced the sudden death of his brother; so that there was an end of their visit to the Priory.

"Well!" exclaimed Mr. Aubrey, calmly, rising after a pause, and standing with his back to the fire, in a musing posture.

"Has he left any family, Charles?" inquired Mrs. Aubrey, with a sigh, her eye still fixed on the letter.

"I—I really don't know—poor fellow! We lose a vote for Shellington—we shall, to a certainty," he added, with an air of chagrin visibly stealing over his features.

"How politics harden the heart, Charles! Just at this moment to be!"

"It is too bad, Agnes; I am—but you see—stay, I don't know either, for there's the Grassingham interest come into the field since the last!"

"Charles, I do really almost think," exclaimed Mrs. Aubrey, with sudden emotion, stepping to his side, and throwing her arms round him affectionately—"that if I were to die, I should be forgotten in a fortnight, if the house were sitting!"

"My love, how can you say such things!" inquired Aubrey, kissing her forehead.

"When Agnes was born, you know"—she murmured inarticulately. Her husband folded her tenderly in his arms in silence. On the occasion she alluded to, he had nearly lost her; and they both had reason to expect that another similar season of peril was not very distant.

"Now, Charles," said Miss Aubrey, presently assuming a cheerful tone; "now for dear old Yatton!"

"Yes, Yatton!—Positively you must!" added Mrs. Aubrey, smiling through her tears.

"What!—Go to Yatton? Why, we must set off to-morrow—they've had no warning."

"What warning does mamma require, Charles? Isn't the dear old place always in apple-pie order?"

"How you love the 'dear old place,' Kate!" exclaimed Mr. Aubrey, in such an affectionate tone as brought his sister in an instant to his side, to urge on her suit; and there stood the Lord of Yatton embraced by these two beautiful women, his own heart seconding every word they uttered.

"How my mother would stare!" said he at length, irresolutely.

"What a bustle every thing will be in!" exclaimed Kate. "I fancy I'd there already! The great blazing fires—the holly and mistletoe. We must all go, Charles—children and all."

"Why, really, I hardly know!"

"Oh! I've settled it all—and what's more, we've no time to lose; this is Tuesday—Christmas-day is Saturday—we must of course stop a night on the way. Hadn't

we better have Griffiths in, to arrange all!"—Aubrey rang the bell.

"Request Mr. Griffiths to come to me," said he.

Within a very few minutes that respectable functionary had made his appearance and received his instructions. The march to Shropshire was countermanded—and hey! for Yatton, for which they were to start the next day about noon. Mr. Griffiths' first step was to pack off Sam, Mr. Aubrey's groom, by the Tally-ho, the first coach to York, starting at two o'clock that very day, with letters announcing the immediate arrival of the family. These orders were received by Sam, (who had been born and bred at Yatton,) while he was bestowing, with vehement sibilation, his customary civilities on a favourite mare of his master's. Down dropped his curycomb; he jumped into the air; snapped his fingers; then he threw his arms round Jenny and tickled her under the chin. "Dang it," said he, as he threw her another feed of oats, "I wish thee was going w' me—dang'd if I don't!" Then he hastily made himself a *bit* tidy; presented himself very respectfully before Mr. Griffiths, to receive the wherewithal to pay his fare; and having obtained it, off he scampered to the Bull and Mouth, as if it had been a neck-and-neck race between him and all London, which should get down to Yorkshire first. A little after one o'clock, his packet of letters was delivered to him; and within another hour Sam was to be seen (quite comfortable with a draught of spiced ale given him by the cook, to make his dinner sit well) on the top of the Tally-ho, rattling along the great North road.

"Come, Kate," said Mrs. Aubrey, entering Miss Aubrey's room, where she was giving directions to her maid, "I've ordered the carriage to be at the door as soon as it can be got ready; we must go off to Coutts'—see!" She held two thin slips of paper, one of which she gave Miss Aubrey—'twas a check for one hundred pounds—her brother's usual Christmas-box—"and then we've a quantity of little matters to buy this afternoon. Come, love, quick!"

Now, Kate had spent nearly all her money, which circumstance, connected with another which I shall shortly mention, had given the poor girl not a little concern. At her earnest request, her brother had, about a year before, built her a nice little school, capable of containing some eighteen or twenty girls, on a slip of land near the vicarage, and old Mrs. Aubrey and her daughter found a resident school-mistress, and, in fact, supported the little establishment, which, at the time I am speaking of, contained some seventeen or eighteen of the villagers' younger children. Miss Aubrey took a prodigious interest in this little school, scarce a day passing without her visiting it when she was at Yatton; and what Kate wanted, was the luxury of giving a Christmas present to both mistress and scholars. That, however, she would have had some difficulty in effecting but for her brother's timely present, which had quite set her heart at ease. On their return, the carriage was crowded with the things they had been purchasing—articles of clothing for the feebler old villagers; work-boxes, samplers, books, Testaments, prayer-books, &c. &c. &c., for the school; the sight of which, I can assure the reader, made Kate far happier than if they had been the costliest articles of dress and jewellery.

The next day was a very pleasant one for traveling—"frosty, but kindly." About one o'clock there might have been seen standing before the door the roomy yellow family carriage, with four post-horses, all in travel-



ing trim. In the rumble sat Mr. Aubrey's valet and Mrs. Aubrey's maid—Miss Aubrey's, and one of the nursery-maids, going down by the coach which had carried Sam—the Tally-ho. The coach-box was piled up with that sort of luggage which, by its lightness and bulk, denotes lady-traveling: inside were Mrs. and Miss Aubrey, muffled in furs, shawls, and pelisses; a nursery-maid, with little Master and Miss Aubrey, equally well protected from the cold; and the vacant seat awaited Mr. Aubrey, who at length made his appearance, having been engaged in giving specific instructions concerning the forwarding of his letters and papers. As soon as he had taken his place, and all had been snugly disposed within, the steps were doubled up, the door closed, the windows drawn up—crack! crack! went the whips of the two postillions, and away rolled the carriage over the dry hard pavement.

"Now that's what I call doing it *uncommon* comfortable," said a pot-boy to one of the footmen at an adjoining house, where he was delivering the porter for the servants' dinner; "how *werry* nice and snug them two looks in the rumble behind."

"He goes to-morrow," carelessly replied the gentleman he was addressing.

"It's a fine thing to be gentlefolk," said the boy, taking up his pot-board.

"Ya-as," drawled the footman, twitching up his shirt collar.

On drawing up to the posting-house, which was within about forty miles of Yatton, the Aubreys found a carriage and four just ready to start, after changing horses; and whose should this prove to be, but Lord De la Zouch's, containing himself, his lady, and his son, Mr. Delamere. His lordship and his son both alighted on accidentally discovering who had overtaken them; and coming up to Mr. Aubrey's carriage windows, exchanged surprised and cordial greetings with its occupants,—whom Lord De la Zouch imagined to have been by this time on their way to Shropshire. Mr. Delamere manifested a surprising eagerness about the welfare of little Agnes Aubrey, who happened to be lying fast asleep in Miss Aubrey's lap: but the evening was fast advancing, and both the traveling parties had yet before them a considerable portion of their journey. After a hasty promise on the part of each to dine with the other, before returning to town for the season—a promise which Mr. Delamere at all events resolved should not be lost sight of—they parted. 'Twas eight o'clock before Mr. Aubrey's eye, which had been for some time on the look-out, caught sight of Yatton woods; and when it did, his heart yearned towards them. The moon shone brightly and cheerily, and it was pleasant to listen to the quickening clattering tramp of the horses upon the dry hard highway, as the travellers rapidly neared a spot endeared to them by every tender association. When within half a mile of the village, they overtook the worthy vicar, who had mounted his nag, and been out on the road to meet the expected comers, for an hour before. Aubrey roused Mrs. Aubrey from her nap, to point out Dr. Tatham, who by that time was cantering along beside the open window. 'Twas refreshing to see the cheerful old man—who looked as ruddy and hearty as ever.

"All well?" he exclaimed, riding close to the window.

"Yes,—but how is my mother?" inquired Aubrey.

"High spirits—high spirits: was with her this afternoon. Have not seen her better for years. So surprised. Ah! here's an old friend—Hector!"

"Bow-wow-wow-wow! Bow!—Bow-wow!"

"Papa! papa!" exclaimed the voice of little Aubrey, struggling to get on his father's lap to look out of the window, "That is Hector! I know it is! He is come to see me! I want to look at him!"

Mr. Aubrey lifted him up as he desired, and a huge black-and-white Newfoundland dog almost leaped up to the window at sight of him clapping his little hands, as if in eager recognition, and then scampered and bounded about in all directions, barking most boisterously, to the infinite delight of little Aubrey. This messenger had been sent on by Sam, the groom, who had been on the look-out for the travellers for some time; and the moment he caught sight of the carriage, pelted down the village, through the park at top speed, up to the hall, there to communicate the good news. The travellers thought that the village had never looked so pretty and picturesque before. The sound of the carriage dashing through it, called all the cottagers to their doors, where they stood bowing and curtsying. It soon reached the park-gates, which were thrown wide open in readiness for its entrance. As they passed the church, they heard its little bells ringing a merry peal to welcome their arrival; its faint chimes went to their very hearts.

"My darling Agnes, here we are again in the old place," said Mr. Aubrey, in a joyous tone, affectionately kissing Mrs. Aubrey and his sister, as, after having wound their way up the park at almost a gallop, they heard themselves rattling over the stone pavement immediately under the old turret gateway. In approaching it, they saw lights glancing about in the hall windows; and before they had drawn up, the great door was thrown open, and several servants (one or two of them grayheaded) made their appearance, eager to release the travellers from their long confinement. A great wood-fire was crackling and blazing in the fireplace opposite the door, casting a right pleasant and cheerful light over the various antique objects ranged around the walls; but the object on which Mr. Aubrey's eye instantly settled was the venerable figure of his mother, standing beside the fireplace with one or two female attendants. The moment that the carriage door was opened, he stepped quietly out, (nearly tumbling, by the way, over Hector, who appeared to think that the carriage-door was opened only to enable him to jump into it, which he prepared to do.)

"God bless you, madam!" faltered Aubrey, his eyes filling with tears, as he received his mother's fervent, but silent greeting, and imagined that the arms folded round him were somewhat feebler than when he had last felt them embracing him. With similar affection was the good old lady received by her daughter and daughter-in-law.

"Where is my pony, grandmamma?" quoth little Aubrey, running up to her, (he had been kept quiet for the last eighty miles or so, by the mention of the aforesaid pony.) "Where is it? I want to see my little pony directly! Mamma says you have got a little pony for me with a long tail: I must see it before I go to bed; I must, indeed—is it in the stable?"

"You shall see it in the morning, my darling—the very first thing," said Mrs. Aubrey, fervently kissing her beautiful little grandson, while tears of joy and pride ran down her cheek. She then pressed her lips on the delicate but flushed cheek of little Agnes, who was fast asleep; and as soon as they had been conducted towards their nursery, Mrs. Aubrey, followed by her children, led the way to the dining-room—the dear delightful old

dining-room, in which all of them had passed so many happy hours of their lives. It was large and lofty; and two antique branch silver candlesticks, standing on sconces upon each side of a strange old straggling carved mantelpiece of inlaid oak, aided by the blaze given out by two immense logs of wood burning beneath, thoroughly illuminated it. The walls were oak-paneled, containing many pictures, several of them of great value; and the floor also was of polished oak, over the centre of which, however, was spread a thick richly-coloured turkey carpet. Opposite the door was a large mullioned bay-window, then, however, concealed behind an ample flowing crimson curtain. On the further side of the fireplace stood a high-backed and roomy arm-chair, almost covered with Kate's embroidery, and in which Mrs. Aubrey had evidently, as usual, been sitting till the moment of their arrival—for on a small ebony table beside it lay her spectacles, and an open volume. Nearly fronting the fireplace was a recess, in which stood an exquisitely carved black ebony cabinet, inlaid with white and red ivory. This, Miss Aubrey claimed as her own, and had appropriated it to her own purposes ever since she was seven years old. "You, dear old thing!" said she, throwing open the folding-doors—"Every thing just as I left it! Really, dear mamma, I could skip about the room for joy! I wish Charles would never leave Yatton again!"

"It's rather lonely, my love, when none of you are with me," said Mrs. Aubrey. "I feel getting older!"

"Dearest mamma," interrupted Miss Aubrey, quickly, "I won't leave you again! I'm quite tired of town—I am indeed!"

Though fires were lit, in their several dressing-rooms, of which they were more than once reminded by their respective attendants, they all remained seated before the fire in carriage costume, (except that Kate had thrown aside her bonnet, her half-uncurled tresses hanging in negligent profusion over her thickly-furred pelisse,) eagerly conversing about the incidents of their journey, and the events which had transpired at Yatton since they had quitted it. At length, however, they retired to perform the refreshing duties of the dressing-room, before sitting down to supper. Of that comfortable meal, within twenty minutes' time or so, they partook with hearty relish. What mortal, however delicate, could resist the fare set before them—the plump capon, the delicious grilled ham, the poached eggs, the floury potatoes, home-baked bread, white and brown—custards, mince-pies—home-brewed ale, as soft as milk, as clear as amber—mulled claret—and so forth? The travellers had evidently never relished any thing more, to the infinite delight of old Mrs. Aubrey; who observing, soon afterwards, irrepressible symptoms of fatigue and drowsiness, ordered them all off to bed—Kate sleeping in the same chamber in which she sat when the reader was permitted to catch a moonlight glimpse of her, as already more than once referred to.

They did not make their appearance the next morning till after nine o'clock. Mrs. Aubrey having read prayers before the assembled servants, as usual, nearly an hour before—~~and~~ duty her son always performed when at the hall—but on this occasion he had overslept himself. He found his mother in the breakfast-room, where she was soon joined by her daughter and daughter-in-law, all of them being in high health and spirits. Just as they were finishing breakfast, little Aubrey burst into the room in a perfect ecstasy—for old Jones had taken him round to the stables, and shown him the little

pony which had been bought for him only a few months before. He had heard it neigh—had seen its long tail—had patted its neck—had seen it eat—and now his vehement prayer was, that his papa, and mamma, and Kate, would immediately go and see it, and take his little sister also. Breakfast over, they separated. Old Mrs. Aubrey went to her own room to be attended by her housekeeper; the other two ladies retired to their rooms—Kate principally engaged in arranging her presents for her little scholars: and Mr. Aubrey repaired to his library—as delightful an old snugery as the most studious recluse could desire—where he was presently attended by his bailiff. He found that every thing was going on as he could have wished. With one or two exceptions, his rents were paid most punctually; the farms and lands kept in capital condition. He was sure an incorrigible old poacher had been giving his people a little trouble, as usual, and was committed for trial at the Spring Assizes; a few trivial trespasses had been committed in search of firewood, and other small matters; which, after having been detailed with great minuteness by his zealous and vigilant bailiff, were dispatched by Mr. Aubrey with a "pooh, pooh!"—then there was Gregory, who held the smallest farm on the estate, at its southern extremity—he was three quarters' rent in arrear—but he had a sick wife and seven children—so he was at once forgiven all that was due, and also what would become due on the ensuing quarter-day. In fact," said Mr. Aubrey, "don't ask him for any more rent. I'm sure the poor fellow will pay when he's able."

Some rents were to be raised; others lowered; and some half dozen of the poorer cottages were to be forthwith put into good repair, at Mr. Aubrey's expense. The two oxen had been sent, on the preceding afternoon, from the home farm to the butcher's, to be distributed among the poorer villagers, according to orders brought down from town, by Sam, the day before. Thus was Mr. Aubrey engaged for an hour or two, till luncheon time, when good Dr. Tatham made his welcome appearance, having been engaged most of the morning in touching up an old Christmas sermon.

He had been vicar of Yatton for nearly thirty years, having been presented to it by the late Mr. Aubrey, with whom he had been intimate at college. He was a delightful specimen of a country parson. Cheerful, unaffected, and good-natured, there was a dash of quaintness, or roughness about his manners, that reminded you of the crust in very fine old port. He had been a widower, and childless, for fifteen years. His parish had been ever since his family, whom he still watched over with an affectionate vigilance. He was respected and beloved by all. Almost every man, woman, and child that had died in Yatton, during nearly thirty years, had departed with the sound of his kind and solemn voice in their ears. He claimed a sort of personal acquaintance with almost all the gravestones in his little churchyard; and when he looked at them, he felt that he had done his duty by the dust that slept underneath. He was at the bedside of a sick person almost as soon, and as often, as the doctor—no matter what sort of weather, or at what hour of the day or night. Methinks I see him now, bustling about the village, with healthy ruddy cheeks, a clear, cheerful eye, hair white as snow; with a small, stout figure, clothed in a suit of rusty black, (knee-breeches and gaiters all round the year,) and with a small shovel-hat. No one lives in the vicarage with him but an elderly woman, his housekeeper, and her husband, whose chief business is to look after the little

garden; in which I have often seen him and his master, with his coat off, digging for hours together. He rises at five in the winter, and four in the summer, being occupied till breakfast with his studies; for he was an excellent scholar, and has not forgotten, in the zealous discharge of his sacred duties, the pursuits of literature and philosophy, in which he gained no inconsiderable distinction in his youth. He derives a very moderate income from his living; but it is even more than sufficient for his necessities. Ever since Mr. Aubrey's devotion to politics has carried him away from Yatton for a considerable portion of each year, Dr. Tatham has been the right-hand counsellor of old Mrs. Aubrey, in all her pious and charitable plans and purposes. Every new-year's-day, there comes from the hall to the vicarage six dozen of fine old port wine—a present from Mrs. Aubrey; but the little doctor, (though he never tells her so) scarce drinks six bottles of them in a year. Two dozen of them go, within a few days' time, to a poor brother parson in an adjoining parish, who, with his wife and three children—all in feeble health—can hardly keep soul and body together, and who, but for this generous brother, would not probably taste a glass of wine throughout the year, except on certain occasions when the very humblest may moisten their poor lips with wine—I mean the SACRAMENT—the sublime and solemn festival given by One who doth not forget the poor and destitute, however in their misery they may sometimes think to the contrary. The remainder of his little present Dr. Tatham distributes in small quantities amongst such of his parishioners as may require it, and may not happen to have come under the immediate notice of Mrs. Aubrey. Dr. Tatham has known Mr. Aubrey ever since he was about five years old. 'Twas the doctor that first taught him Greek and Latin; and, up to his going to college, gave him the frequent advantage of his learned experience. But surely I have gone into a very long digression.

While Miss Aubrey, accompanied by her sister-in-law, and followed by a servant carrying a great bag, filled with articles brought from London the day before, went to the school which I have before mentioned, in order to distribute her prizes and presents, Mr. Aubrey and Dr. Tatham set off on a walk through the village.

"I must do something for that old steeple of yours, doctor," said Aubrey, as arm in arm they approached the church; "it looks crumbling away in many parts."

"If you'd only send a couple of masons to repair the porch, and make it weather-tight, it would satisfy me for some years to come," said the doctor.

"Well—we'll look at it," replied Aubrey; and turning aside, they entered the little church-yard.

"How I love this old yew-tree!" he exclaimed, as they passed under it; "it casts a kind of tender gloom around that always makes me pensive, not to say melancholy." A sigh escaped him, as his eye glanced at the family vault, which was almost in the centre of the shade, where lay his father, three brothers, and a sister, and where, in the course of nature, a few short years would see the precious remains of his mother deposited. But the doctor, who had hastened forward alone for a moment, finding the church-door open, called out to Mr. Aubrey, who soon stood within the porch. It certainly required a little repairing, which Mr. Aubrey said should be looked to immediately. "See—we're all preparing for to-morrow," said Dr. Tatham, leading the way into the little church, where the grizzle-headed clerk was busy decorating the pulpit, reading-desk, and altar-piece, with the cheerful emblems of the season.

MUSEUM.—APRIL, 1840.

"I never see these," said the doctor, taking up one of the sprigs of mistletoe lying on a form beside them, "but I think of your own Christmas verses, Mr. Aubrey, when you were younger and fresher than you now are—don't you recollect them?"

"Oh—pooh!"

"But I remember them;" and he began,—

"Hail! silvery, modest mistletoe,  
Wreath'd round winter's brow of snow,  
Clinging so chastely, tenderly:  
Hail, holly, darkly, richly green,  
Whose crimson berries blush between  
Thy prickly foliage, modestly.  
Ye winter-flowers, bloom sweet and fair,  
Though Nature's garden else be bare—  
Ye vernal glistening emblems, meet  
To twine a Christmas coronet."

"That will do, doctor—what a memory you have for trifles!"

"Peggy! Peggy!—you're sadly overdoing it," said the doctor, calling out to the sexton's wife, who was busy at work in the squire's pew—a large square pew in the nave, near the pulpit. "Why, you don't want to hide the squire's family from the congregation? You're quite putting a holly hedge all round."

"Please you, sir, I've got so much I don't know where to put it—so, in course, I put it here."

"Then," said the doctor, with a smile, looking round the church, "let John get up and put some of it in those old hatchments; and," looking up at the clerk, busy at work in the pulpit, "don't put quite so much up there in my candlesticks."

With this the parson and the squire took their departure. As they passed slowly up the village, which already wore a sort of holiday aspect, they met on all hands with a cordial and respectful greeting. The quiet little public-house turned out some four or five stout fellows—all tenants of his—with their pipes in their hands, and who took off their hats, and bowed very low. Mr. Aubrey went up and entered into conversation with them for some minutes—their families and farms, he found, were well and thriving. There was quite a little crowd of women about the shop of Nick Steele, the butcher, who, with an extra hand to help him, was giving out the second ox which had been sent from the hall, to the persons whose names had been given in to him from Mrs. Aubrey. Further on, some were cleaning their little windows, others sweeping their floors, and sprinkling sand over them; most were sticking holly and mistletoe in their windows, and over their mantel-pieces. Every where, in short, was to be seen that air of quiet preparation for the cheerful morrow, which fills a thoughtful observer with feelings of pensive but exquisite satisfaction.

Mr. Aubrey returned home towards dusk, cheered and enlivened by his walk. His sudden plunge into the simplicity and comparative solitude of country life—and that country Yatton—had quite refreshed his feelings, and given a tone to his spirits. Of course, Dr. Tatham was to dine at the hall on the morrow; if he did not, indeed, it would have been for the first time during the last five-and-twenty years.

Christmas eve passed pleasantly and quietly enough at the hall. After dinner the merry little ones were introduced, and their prattle and romps occupied an hour right joyously. As soon as, smothered with kisses, they had been dismissed to bed, old Mrs. Aubrey composed

herself in her great chair to her usual after-dinner's nap; while her son, his wife, and sister, sitting fronting the fire—a decanter or two, and a few wine-glasses, and dessert remaining on the table behind them—sat conversing in a subdued tone, now listening to the wind roaring in the chimney—a sound which not a little enhanced their sense of comfort—then criticising the disposition of the evergreens with which the room was plentifully decorated, and laying out their movements during the ensuing fortnight. Mrs. Aubrey and Kate were, with affectionate earnestness, contrasting to Aubrey the peaceful pleasures of a country life with the restless excitement and endless anxieties of a London political life, to which they saw him more and more addicting himself; he all the while playfully parrying their attacks, but secretly acknowledging the truth and force of what they said, when—hark!—a novel sound from without, which roused the old lady from her nap. What do you think, dear reader, it was? The voices of little girls singing what seemed to be a Christmas hymn: yes, they caught the words—

"Hark! the herald-angels sing,  
Glory to the new-born king;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild."—

"It must be your little school girls," said old Mrs. Aubrey, looking at her daughter and listening.

"I do believe it is," quoth Kate, her eyes suddenly filling with tears, as she sat eagerly inclining her ears towards the window.

"They must be standing on the grass-plot just before the window," said Mr. Aubrey: the tiny voices were thrilling his very heart within him. His sensitive nature might be compared to a delicate Æolian harp, which gave forth, with the slightest breath of accident or circumstance,—

"The still, sad music of humanity."

In a few moments he was almost in tears—the sounds were so unlike the fierce and turbulent cries of political warfare to which his ears had been latterly accustomed! The more the poor children sung, the more was he affected. Kate's tears fell fast, for she had been in an excited mood before this little incident occurred. "Do you hear, mamma," said she, "the voice of the poor little thing that was last taken into the school? The little darling!" Kate tried to smile away her emotion; but 'twas in vain. Mr. Aubrey gently drew aside the curtain, and pulled up the central blind—and there, headed by their matron, stood the little singers exposed to view, some eighteen in number, ranged in a row on the grass, their white dresses glistening in the moonlight. The oldest seemed not more than ten or twelve years old, while the younger ones could not be more than five or six. They seemed all singing from their very hearts. Aubrey stood looking at them with very deep interest.

As soon as they had finished their hymn, they were conducted into the housekeeper's room, according to orders sent for that purpose from Mrs. Aubrey, and each of them received a little present of money, besides a full glass of Mrs. Jackson's choicest raisin wine, and a currant bun; Kate slipping half-a-guinea into the hand of their mistress, to whose wish to afford gratification to the inmates of the hall, was entirely owing the little incident which had so pleased and surprised them.

"A happy Christmas to you, dear papa and mamma!" said little Aubrey, about eight o'clock the next morning, pushing aside the curtains, and clambering up on the

high bed where Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey were still asleep—soon, however, they were awake by the welcome sound. The morning promised a beautiful day. The air, though cold, was clear; and the branches of the trees visible from their windows, were all covered with hoar-frost, which seemed to line them as if with silver fringe. The little bells of Yatton church were ringing a merry peal; but, how different in tone and strength from the clangour of the London church-bells! Christmas was indeed at last arrived—and cheerful were the greetings of those who soon after met at the bountiful breakfast table. Old Mrs. Aubrey was going to church with them—in fact, not even a domestic was to be left at home that could possibly be spared. By the time that the carriage, with the fat and lazy-looking gray horses, was at the hall door, the sun had burst out in beauty from an almost cloudless sky. The three ladies rode alone; Aubrey preferring to walk, accompanied by his little son, as the ground was dry and hard, and the distance very short. A troop of some twelve or fourteen servants, male and female, presently followed; and then came Mr. Aubrey, leading along the heir of Yatton—a boy of whom he might well be proud, as the future possessor of his name, his fortune, and his honours. When he had reached the church, the carriage was returning home. Almost the whole congregation stood collected before the church door, to see the Squire's family enter; and reverent were the curties and bows with which old Mrs. Aubrey and her lovely companions were received. Very soon after they had taken their places, Mr. Aubrey and his son made their appearance; objects they were of the deepest interest, as they passed along to their pew. A few minutes after, little Dr. Tatham entered the church in his surplice, (which he almost always put on at home,) with a face, serious to be sure, but yet overspread with an expression even more bland and benignant than usual. He knew there was not a soul among the little crowd around him that did not really love him, and that did not know how heartily he returned their love. All eyes were of course on the squire's pew. Mrs. Aubrey was looking well—her daughter and daughter-in-law were thought by all to be by far the most beautiful women in the world—what must people think of them in London! Mr. Aubrey looked, they thought, pleased and happy, but rather paler, and even a little thinner; and as for the little Squire, with his bright eyes, his rosy cheeks, his arch smile, his curling auburn hair—he was the pride of Yatton.

Dr. Tatham read prayers, as he always did, with great distinctness and deliberation, so that every body in the church, young and old, could catch every syllable; and he preached, considerably enough, a very short sermon—pithy, homely, and affectionate. He reminded them that he was then preaching his thirty-first Christmas-day sermon from that pulpit. The service over, none of the congregation moved from their places till the occupants of the squire's pew had quitted it; but as soon as they had got outside of the door, the good people poured out after them, and almost lined the way from the church door to the gate at which the carriage stood, receiving and answering a hundred kind inquiries concerning themselves, their families, and their circumstances.

Mr. Aubrey stayed behind, desirous of taking another little ramble with Dr. Tatham through the village, for the day was indeed bright and beautiful, and the occasion inspiring. There was not a villager within four or five miles of the hall who did not sit down that day to a comfortable little relishing dinner, at least one-third of them being indebted for it directly to the bounty of the



Aubreys. As soon as Dr. Tatham had taken off his gown, he accompanied Mr. Aubrey in cheerful mood, in the briskest spirits. 'Twas delightful to see the smoke come curling out of every chimney, scarce any one visible, suggesting to you that they were all housed, and preparing for, or partaking of, their roast-beef and plum-pudding. Now and then the bustling wife would show her heated red face at the door, and hastily curtsy as they passed, then returning to dish up her little dinner.

"Ah, ha! Mr. Aubrey!—isn't such a day as this worth a whole year in town?" exclaimed Dr. Tatham.

"Both have their peculiar influences, doctor; the pleasure of the contrast would be lost if!"

"Contrast! Believe me, in the language of Virgil!"

"Ah! how goes on old blind Bess, doctor?" interrupted Aubrey, as they approached the smallest cottage in the village—in fact, the very last.

"She's just the same that she has been these last twenty years. Shall we look in on the old creature?"

"With all my heart. I hope, poor soul! that she has not been overlooked on this festive occasion."

"Trust Mrs. Aubrey for that! I'll answer for it, we shall find old Bess as happy, in her way, as she can be."

This was a stone-blind old woman, who had been bedridden for the last twenty years. She had certainly passed her hundredth year—some said two or three years before—and had lived in her present little cottage for nearly half a century, having grown out of the recollection of almost all the inhabitants of the village. She had long been a pensioner of Mrs. Aubrey's, by whom alone, indeed, she was supported. Her great age, her singular appearance, and a certain rambling way of talking that she had, earned her the reputation in the village of being able to say strange things; and one or two of the old gossips knew of things coming to pass according to what—poor old soul!—she had predicted!

Dr. Tatham gently pushed open the door. The cottage consisted, in fact, of but one room, and that a very small one, and lit by only one little window. The floor was clean, and evidently just fresh sanded. On a wooden stool, opposite a fireplace, on which a small saucepan pot was placed, sat a girl about twelve years old, (a daughter of the woman who lived nearest,) crumbling some bread into a basin, with some broth in it. On a narrow bed against the wall, opposite the window, was to be seen the somewhat remarkable figure of the solitary old tenant of the cottage. She was sitting up, resting against the pillow, which was placed on end against the wall. She was evidently a very tall woman; and her long, brown, wrinkled, shrivelled face, with prominent cheekbones and bushy white eyebrows, betokened the possession in earlier days, of a most masculine expression of features. Her hair, white as snow, was gathered back from her forehead, under a spreading plain white cap; and her sightless eyes, wide open, stared forward with a startling and somewhat sinister expression. She was wrapped round in a clean white bedgown, and her long thin arms lay straight before her on the outside of the bed-clothes. Her lips were moving, as if she were talking to herself.

"She's a strange-looking object, indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Aubrey, as he and Dr. Tatham stood watching her for a few moments in silence.

"Dame! dame!" said the doctor, loudly, approaching her bedside, "how are you to-day? It's Christmas-day—I wish you a merry Christmas."

"Ay, ay—merry, merry! More the merrier! I've seen a hundred and nine of them!"

"You seem very happy, dame."

"They won't give me my broth—my broth."

"It's coming, granny," called out the shrill voice of the girl sitting before the fire, quickening her motions.

"Here's the squire come to see you, dame, and he wishes you a happy Christmas," said Dr. Tatham.

"What! the squire! Alive yet? Ah, well-a-day! well-a-day!" said she, in a feeble, mournful tone, slowly rubbing together her long, skinny, wrinkled hands, on the backs of which the veins stood out like knotted whipcord. She repeated the last words several times, in a truly doleful tone, gently shaking her head.

"Granny's been very sad, sir, to-day, and cried two or three times," said the little girl, stirring about the hot broth.

"Poor squire! doth he not look sad?" inquired the old woman.

"Why should I, dame? What have I to fear?" said Mr. Aubrey.

"Merry in the hall! all, merry! merry! But no one has heard it but old blind Bess. Where's the squire?" she added, suddenly turning her face full towards where they were standing—and it seemed whitened with emotion. Her staring eyes were settled on Mr. Aubrey's face, as if she were reading his very soul.

"Here I am, dame," said he, with a great deal of curiosity, to say the least of it.

"Give me your hand, squire," said she, stretching out her left arm, and working about her talon-like fingers, as if in eagerness to grasp Mr. Aubrey's hand, which he gave her.

"Never fear! never, never! Happy in the hall! I see all! How long?"

"Why, dame, this is truly a very pleasant greeting of yours," interposed Dr. Tatham with a smile.

"Short and bitter! long and sweet! Put your in God, squire."

"I hope I do, granny," replied Mr. Aubrey seriously.

"I see! I hear!—my broth! my broth!—where is it?"

"Here it is, granny," said the girl.

"Good day, dame," said Mr. Aubrey, gently disengaging his hand from hers; and before they had left the cottage she began to swallow very greedily the broth with which the little girl fed her.

"This is the sort of way in which this old superannuated creature has frightened one or two of!"

"Is it, indeed?" inquired Mr. Aubrey, with a sort of mechanical smile. Dr. Tatham saw that he was in a very serious humour.

"She's alarmed you, I protest!—I protest she has!" exclaimed the doctor, with a smile, as they walked along. Now he knew the disposition and character of Aubrey intimately; and was well aware of a certain tendency he had to superstition.

"My dear doctor, I assure you that you are mistaken—I am indeed not alarmed—but at the same time I will tell you something not a little singular. Would you believe that a month or two ago, when in town, I dreamed that I heard some one uttering the very words this old woman has just been uttering?"

"Ah! ha, ha!" laughed the doctor; and, after a second or two's pause, Aubrey, as if ashamed of what he had said, echoed the laugh, and their conversation passed on to political topics, which kept them engaged for the remainder of their walk, Mr. Aubrey quitting his companion at the door of the vicarage, to be rejoined by him at five o'clock, the dinner hour at the hall. As Mr. Aubrey walked along the park, the shades of evening casting a deepening gloom around him, his thoughts

involuntarily recurred to the cottage of old blind Bess, and he felt vague apprehensions flitting with darkening shade across his mind. Though he was hardly weak enough to attach any definite meaning or importance to the gibberish he had heard, it still had left an unpleasant impression, and he was vexed at feeling a wish that the incident—trifling as he was willing to believe it—should not be mentioned by Dr. Tatham at the hall; and still more, on recollecting that he had *purposely abstained* from requesting the good doctor not to do so. All this implied that the matter had occupied his thoughts to a greater extent than he secretly relished. On reaching, however, the hall door, this brief pressure on his feelings quickly ceased; for on entering he saw Mrs. Aubrey, his sister, and his two children at high romps together in the hall, and he heartily joined in them.

By five o'clock the little party were seated at the cheerful dinner-table, covered with the glittering old family plate, and that kind of fare, at once substantial and luxurious, which befitted the occasion. Old Mrs. Aubrey, in her simple white turban and black velvet dress, presided with a kind of dignified cheerfulness which was delightful to see. Kate had contrived to make herself look more lovely even than usual, wearing a dress of dark blue satin, tastefully trimmed with blonde, and which exquisitely comported with her lovely complexion. Oh that Delamere had been sitting opposite to, or beside her! The more matured proportions of her blooming sister-in-law appeared to infinite advantage in a rich green velvet dress, while a superb diamond glistened with subdued lustre in her beautiful bosom. She wore no ornaments in her dark hair, which was, as indeed might be said of Kate, "when unadorned, adorned the most." The bearded old butler, as brisk as his choicest champagne, with which he perpetually hustled round the table, and the three steady-looking old family servants, going about their business with quiet celerity—the delicious air of antique elegance around them,—this was a Christmas dinner after one's own heart!—Oh, the merry and dear old Yatton! And as if there were not loveliness enough already in the room, behold the door suddenly pushed open as soon as the dinner is over, and run up to his gay and laughing mother, her little son, his ample snowy collar resting gracefully on his crimson velvet dress. 'Tis her hope and pride—her first-born—the little squire; but where is his sister!—where is Agnes! 'Tis even as Charles says—she fell asleep in the very act of being dressed, and they were obliged to put her to bed; so, Charles is alone in his glory. You may well fold your delicate white arms around him, mamma.

His little gold cup is nearly filled to join in the first toast: are you all ready? The worthy doctor has poured Mrs. Aubrey's glass, and Kate's glass, full up to the brim.—"Our next Christmas!"

Yes, your next Christmas! The vigilant eye of Dr. Tatham alone perceived a faint change of colour in Mr. Aubrey's cheek as the words were uttered; and his eye wandered for an instant, as if tracing across the room the image of old blind Bess; but 'twas gone in a moment—Aubrey was soon in much higher spirits than usual. Well he might be. How could man be placed in happier circumstances than he was? As soon as the ladies had withdrawn, together with little Aubrey, the doctor and Mr. Aubrey drew their chairs before the fire, and enjoyed a long hour's pleasant chat on matters domestic and political. As to the latter, the parson and the squire were stout Tories; and a speech which Aubrey had lately delivered in the house, on the catholic claims,

raised him to a pitch of eminence in the parson's estimation, when he had very few men in the country to keep him company. The doctor here got on very fast indeed; and was just assuring the squire that he saw dark days in store for old England from the machinations of the papists; and that, for his part, he should rejoice to "seal his testimony with his blood," and would go to the stake not only without flinching, but rejoicing—(all which I verily believe he verily believed he would have done,)—and coveting the crown of martyrdom, when Aubrey caught the sounds of his sister playing on the organ, a noble instrument, which a year or two before, at her urgent request, he had purchased and placed in the drawing-room, whither he and the doctor at once repaired. 'Twas a spacious and lofty room, well calculated for the splendid instrument which occupied the large recess fronting the door. Miss Aubrey was playing Handel, and with an exquisite perception of his matchless power and beauty. Hark! did you ever hear the grand yet simple recitative she is now commencing?

*"In the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem,*

*"Saying—Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him."*

The doctor officiated as chaplain that evening. The room was almost filled with servants, many of whose looks very plainly showed the merry doings that had been going on in the servants' hall; some of them could scarce keep their eyes open; one or two sat winking at each other, and so forth. Under the circumstances, therefore, the doctor, with much judgment, read very short prayers, and immediately after took his departure.

The next morning, which proved as fine as the preceding, Mr. Aubrey was detained in with his letters, and one or two other little matters of business in his library, till luncheon time. "What say you, Kate, to a ride round the estate?" said he, on taking his seat. Miss Aubrey was delighted; and forthwith the horses were ordered to be got ready as soon as possible.

"You must not mind a little rough riding, Kate, for we've got to go over some ugly places. I'm going to meet Waters at the end of the avenue, about that old sycamore—we must have it down at last."

"Oh no, Charles, no; I thought we had settled that last year."

"Pho! if it had not been for you, Kate, it would have been down two years ago at least. Its hour is come at last; 'tis indeed, so no pouting! It is injuring the other trees; and, besides, it spoils the prospect from the back of the house."

"'Tis only Waters that puts all these things into your head, Charles, and I shall let him know my opinion on the subject when I see him! Mamma, haven't you a word to say for the old?"

But Mr. Aubrey, not deeming it discreet to await the new force which was being brought against him, started off to go round and see a newly-purchased horse, just brought to the stables.

Kate, who really became every thing, looked charming in her blue riding-habit, sitting on her horse with infinite ease and grace—a capital horsewoman. The exercise soon brought a rich bloom upon her cheek; and as she cantered along the road by the side of her brother, no one that met them but must have been struck with her beauty. Just as they had dropped into an easy walk—

"Charles," said she, observing two horsemen approaching them, "who can these be? Did you—did you ever see such figures? And how they ride!"

"Why, certainly," replied her brother, smiling, "they look like a couple of Cockneys."

"Good gracious, what puppies!" exclaimed Miss Aubrey, lowering her voice as they neared the persons she spoke of.

"They are a most extraordinary couple. Who can they be?" said Mr. Aubrey, a smile forcing itself into his features. One of them was dressed in a light blue surtout, with the tip of a white pocket handkerchief seen peeping out of a pocket in the front of it. His hat, with scarce any brim to it, was stuck aslant on the top of a bushy head of hair. His shirt-collars were turned down completely over his stock, displaying a great quantity of dirt-coloured hair under his chin; while a pair of moustaches, of the same colour, were sprouting upon his lip. A quizzing-glass was stuck in his right eye, and in his hand he carried a whip with a shining silver head. The other was nearly as much distinguished by the elegance of his appearance. He had a glossy hat, a purple-coloured velvet waistcoat, two pins connected by little chains in his stock, a bottle-green surtout, sky-blue trousers. In short, who should these be but our old friends Titmouse and Snap? Whoever they might be, it was plain that they were perfect novices on horseback, and their horses had every appearance of having been much fretted and worried by their riders. To the surprise of Mr. Aubrey and his sister, these two personages attempted to reign in, as they neared, with the evident intention of speaking to them.

"Pray—a—sir, will you, sir, tell us," commenced Titmouse, with a desperate attempt to appear at his ease, as he tried to make his horse stand still for a moment—"isn't there a place called—called"—here his horse, whose sides were constantly being galled by the spurs of its unconscious rider, began to back a little, then to go on one side, and, in Titmouse's fright, his glass dropped from his eye, and he seized hold of the pommel. Nevertheless, to show the lady how completely he was at his ease all the while, he leveled a great many oaths and curses at the eyes and soul of his wayward brute; who, however, not in the least moved by them, but infinitely disliking the spurs of its rider and the twisting round of its mouth by the reins, seemed more and more inclined for mischief, and backed close up to the edge of the ditch.

"I'm afraid, sir, you are not much accustomed to riding. Will you permit me?"

"Oh, yes—ye—ye—s, sir, I am uncommon—whe-o-uy! wh-oy!"—(then a fresh volley of oaths.) "Oh, dear—what!—what is he going to do! Snap! Snap!" 'Twas, however, quite in vain to call on that gentleman for assistance; for he had grown as pale as death, on finding that his own brute seemed strongly disposed to follow the example of the other, being particularly inclined to rear up on its hind legs. The very first motion of the sort brought Snap's heart (not large enough, perhaps, to choke him) into his mouth. Titmouse's beast suddenly inclined the contrary way; and throwing its hind feet into the air, sent its terrified rider flying, head over heels, into the very middle of the hedge, from which he dropped into the wet ditch. Both Mr. Aubrey and his groom dismounted, and secured the horse, who, having got rid of his ridiculous rider, stood quietly enough. Titmouse proved to be more frightened than hurt. His hat was crushed flat to his head, and half the left side of his face covered with mud—as, indeed, were his clothes

all the way down. The groom (almost splitting with laughter) helped him on again; and as Mr. and Miss Aubrey were setting off—"I think, sir," said he, politely, "you were inquiring for some place?"

"Yes, sir," quoth Snap. "Isn't there a place called Ya—Yat—Yat—(be quiet, you brute,)—Yatton about here?"

"Yes, sir—straight on." Miss Aubrey hastily threw her veil over her face, to conceal her laughter, spurred her horse, and she and her brother were soon out of sight of the strangers.

"I say, Snap," quoth Titmouse, when they had got a little composed, "see that lovely gal?"

"Fine girl—devilish fine!" replied Snap.

"I'm blessed if I don't think—'pon my life, I believe we've met before."

"Didn't seem to know you."

"Ah! I don't know—how uncommon infernal unfortunate to happen just at the moment when"—Titmouse became silent; for all of a sudden he recollected when and where, and under what circumstances he had seen Miss Aubrey before, and which his vanity would not allow of his telling Snap. She had once accompanied her sister-in-law to Messrs. Dowlas, Tagrag, and Company's, for some small matter. Titmouse had helped her, and his absurdity of manner provoked a smile, which Titmouse a little misconstrued; so that when, a Sunday or two afterwards, he met her in the Park, the little fool had the presumption to nod to her—she having not the slightest notion who he was—and of course not, on the present occasion, having the least recollection of him. The reader will remember that this little incident made a deep impression on the mind of Mr. Titmouse.

The coincidence was really not a little singular. To return to Mr. Aubrey and his sister. After riding a mile or two further up the road, they leaped over a very low mound or fence, which formed the extreme boundary of that part of the estate, and having passed through a couple of fields, they entered the lower extremity of that fine avenue of elms, at the higher end of which stood Kate's favourite tree, and also Waters and his under-bailiff—who looked to her like a couple of executioners, only awaiting the fiat of her brother. The sun shone brightly upon the doomed sycamore—"the axe was laid at its root." As they rode up the avenue, Kate begged very hard for mercy; but for once her brother seemed obdurate—the tree, he said, *must* come down.

"Remember, Charles," said she, passionately, as they drew up, "how we've all of us romped and sported under it! Poor papa also!"

"See, Kate, how rotten it is," said her brother; and riding close to it, with his whip he snapped off two or three of its feeble silvery-gray branches—"it's high time for it to come down."

"It fills the grass all round with little branches, sir, whenever there's the least breath of wind," said Waters.

"It won't hardly hold a crow's weight on the topmost branches, sir," said the under-bailiff.

"Had it any leaves last summer?" inquired Mr. Aubrey.

"I don't think," said Waters, "it had a hundred all over it."

"Really, Kate, 'tis such a melancholy, unsightly object, when seen from any part of the quadrangle,—turning round on his horse to look at the rear of the hall, which was at about eighty yards' distance. "It looks such an old withered thing amongst the fresh green trees around it—'tis quite a painful contrast." Kate had gently

urged on her horse while her brother was speaking, till she was close beside him. "Charles," said she, in a low whisper, "does it not remind you a little of poor old mamma, with her gray hairs, among her children and grandchildren? She is not out of place amongst us—is she?" her eyes filled with tears. So did her brother's.

"Dearest Kate," said he, with emotion, affectionately grasping her little hand, "you have triumphed! The old tree shall never be cut down in my time! Waters, let the tree stand; if any thing be done to it, let the greatest care be taken of it." Miss Aubrey turned her head aside to conceal her emotion. Had they been alone, she would have flung her arms round her brother's neck.

"If I were to speak my mind," said Waters, seeing the turn things were taking, "I should say with our young lady, the old tree's quite a kind of ornament in this here situation, and it sets off the rest." [It was he who had been worrying Mr. Aubrey for these last three years to have it cut down.]

"Well," replied Mr. Aubrey, "however that may be, let me hear no more of cutting it down. Ah! what does old Jolter want here?" said he, observing an old tenant of that name, almost bent double with age, hobbling towards them. He was wrapped up in a thick blue coat, and his hair was long and white.

"I don't know, sir—I'll go and see," said Waters.

"What's the matter, Jolter?" he inquired, stepping forward to meet him.

"Nothing much, sir," replied the old man, taking off his hat and bowing very low towards Mr. and Miss Aubrey.

"Put your hat on, my old friend," said Mr. Aubrey.

"I only come to bring you this bit of paper, sir, if you please," said the old man, addressing Waters. "You said a while ago, as how I was always to bring you papers that were left with me; and this"—taking one out of his pocket—"was left with me only about an hour ago. It's seemingly a lawyer's paper, and was left by an uncommon gay young chap. He asked me my name, and then he looked at the paper, and read it all over, but I couldn't make any thing of it."

"What is it?" inquired Mr. Aubrey, as Waters cast his eye over a sheet of paper, partly printed and partly written.

"Why, it seems the old story, sir—that slip of waste land, sir. Mr. Tompkins is at it again, sir."

"Well, if he chooses to spend his money in that way, I can't help it. Let me look at the paper." He did so.

"Yes, it seems the same kind of thing as before. Well," handing it back, "send it to Mr. Parkinson, and tell him to look to it; and at all events, take care that old Jolter comes to no trouble by the business. How's the old wife, Jacob?"

"She's dreadful bad with rheumatis, sir; but the stuff that madam sends her does her a woundy deal of good, sir, in her inside."

"Well, we must try if we can't send you some more; and, harkee, if the good wife doesn't get better soon, come up to the hall, and we'll have the doctor call on her. Now, Kate, let us away homeward." And they were soon out of sight.

I do not intend to deal so unceremoniously or summarily as Mr. Aubrey did with the document which had been brought to his notice by Jolter, then handed over to Waters, and by him, according to orders, transmitted the next day to Mr. Parkinson, Mr. Aubrey's attorney. It was what is called a "DECLARATION IN EJECTMENT;"

touching which, in order to throw a ray or two of light upon a document which will make no small figure in this history, I have been to a very renowned sergeant-at-law, and have gained a little information on the point.

If Jones claims the debt, or goods, or damages from Smith, one would think that, if he went to law, the action would be, "Jones *versus* Smith;" and so it is. But behold, if it be LAND which is claimed by Jones from Smith, the style and name of the cause stands thus:—"Doe, on the demise of Jones *versus* Roe." Instead, therefore, of Jones and Smith fighting out the matter in their own proper names, they set up a couple of puppets, (called John Doe and Richard Roe,) who fall upon one another in a very quaint fashion, after the manner of Punch and Judy. John Doe pretends to be the real plaintiff, and Richard Roe the real defendant. John Doe says that the land which Richard Roe has is his, (the said John Doe's,) because Smith (the real plaintiff,) gave him a lease of it; and Smith is then called "the lessor of the plaintiff." John Doe further says that one Richard Roe, (who calls himself by the very significant and expressive name of a "*Casual Ejector*,") came and turned him out, and so John Doe brings his action against Richard Roe. I am informed that whenever land is sought to be recovered in England, this anomalous and farcical proceeding must be adopted. It is, it seems, the duty of the *real* plaintiff (Jones) to serve on the *real* defendant (Smith) the queer document which I shall proceed to lay before the reader; and also to append to it an affectionate note, intimating the serious consequences which will ensue upon inattention or contumacy. The "Declaration," then, which had been served upon old Jolter, was in the words, letters, and figures following—that is to say:—

#### "IN THE COMMON PLEAS.

"*Michaelmas Term*,—th Geo. III.

"YORKSHIRE, to wit—Richard Roe was attached to answer John Doe of a plea wherefore the said Richard Roe, with force and arms, &c., entered in two messuages, two dwelling-houses, two cottages, two stables, two out-houses, two yards, two gardens, two orchards, twenty acres of land covered with water, twenty acres of arable land, twenty acres of pasture land, and twenty acres of other land, with the appurtenances, situated in the parish of *Yatton*, in the County of Yorkshire, which TITTLERAT TITMOUSE, Esquire, had demised to the said John Doe for a term which is not yet expired, and ejected him from his said farm, and other wrongs to the said John Doe there did, to the great damage of the said John Doe, and against the peace of our Lord the King, &c.; and thereupon the said John Doe, by OILY GAMMON, his attorney, complains.—

"That whereas the said TITTLERAT TITMOUSE, on this—th day of August, in the year of our Lord 1813, at the parish aforesaid, in the county aforesaid, had demised the same tenements, with the appurtenances, to the said John Doe, to have and to hold the same to the said John Doe and his assigns from thenceforth, for and during, and unto the full end and term of twenty years from thence next ensuing, and fully to be completed and ended: By virtue of which said demise, the said John Doe entered into the said tenements, with the appurtenances, and became and was thereof possessed for the said term, so to him thereof granted as aforesaid. And the said John Doe being so thereof possessed, the said Richard Roe afterwards, to wit, on the day and year aforesaid, at the parish aforesaid, in the county afore-



said, with force and arms, &c., entered into the said tenements, with the appurtenances, which the said TITMOUTH had demised to the said John Doe in manner and for the term aforesaid, which is not yet expired, and ejected the said John Doe from his said farm; and other wrongs to the said John Doe then and there did, to the great damage of the said John Doe, and against the peace of our said Lord the now King. Wherefore the said John Doe saith that he is injured, and hath sustained damages to the value of £50, and therefore he brings his suit, &c.

"LEATHERHEAD, for the plaintiff. }  
TITTIWITTY, for the defendant. }

Pledges of John Den.  
Prosecutor. } Richard Penn.

"MR. JACOB JOLTER,

"I am informed that you are in possession of, or claim title to, the premises mentioned in the declaration of ejectment mentioned, or to some part thereof: And I, being sued in this action as a casual ejector only, and having no claim or title to the same, do advise you to appear, next Hilary Term, in His Majesty's Court of Common Pleas at Westminster, by some attorney of that court; and then and there, by a rule to be made of the same court, to cause yourself to be made defendant in my stead; otherwise, I shall suffer judgment to be entered against me by default, and you will be turned out of possession.

"Your loving friend,

"Richard Roe.

"Dated this 8th day of December, 18—."

You may regard the above document in the light of a deadly and destructive missile, thrown by an unperceived enemy into a peaceful citadel, attracting no particular notice from the innocent, unsuspecting inhabitants—amongst whom, nevertheless, it presently explodes, and all is terror, death, and ruin.

Mr. Parkinson, Mr. Aubrey's solicitor, who resided at Grilston, the post-town nearest to Yatton, from which it was distant about six or seven miles, was sitting on the evening of Tuesday the 28th December 18—, in his office, nearly finishing a letter to his London agents, Messrs. Runnington and Company—one of the most eminent firms in the profession—and which he was desirous of despatching by that night's mail. Amongst other papers which have come into my hands in connection with this history, I have happened to light on the letter Mr. Parkinson was writing; and as it is not long, and affords a specimen of the way in which business is carried on between town and country attorneys and solicitors, here followeth a copy of it:—

"Grilston, 28th Dec. 18—.

"Dear Sirs,

"Re Middleton.

"Have you got the marriage-settlements between these parties ready? If so, please send them as soon as possible; for both the lady's and gentleman's friends are (as usual in such cases) very pressing for them.

"Puddinghead v. Quickwit.

"Plaintiff bought a horse of defendant in November last, 'warranted sound,' and paid for it on the spot £64. A week afterwards, his attention was accidentally drawn to the animal's head; and, to his infinite surprise he discovered that the left eye was a glass eye, so closely resembling the other in colour, that the difference could

not be discovered except on a very close examination. I have seen it myself, and it is indeed wonderfully well done. My countrymen are certainly pretty sharp hands in such matters—but this beats every thing I ever heard of. Surely this is a breach of the warranty. Or is it to be considered a *patent* defect, which would not be within warranty?—Please take pleader's opinion, and particularly as to whether the horse could be brought into court to be viewed by the court and jury, which would have a great effect. If your pleader thinks the action will lie, let him draw declaration, *venue*—Lancashire (for my client would have no chance with a Yorkshire jury.) *Qu.*—Is the man who sold the horse to defendant a competent witness for the plaintiff, to prove that when he sold it to defendant it had but one eye?

"Mule v. Slott.

"I cannot get these parties to come to an amicable settlement. You may remember, from the two former actions, that it is for damages on account of two geese of defendant having been found on a few yards of Chalmoss belonging to the plaintiff. Defendant now contends that he is entitled to common, *par cause de vicinage*. *Qu.*—Can this be shown under a plea of leave and licence?—About two years ago, also, a pig belonging to plaintiff got into defendant's flower-garden, and did at least £3 worth of damage.—Can this be in any way set off against the present action? There is no hope of avoiding a third trial, as the parties are now more exasperated against each other than before; and the expense (as at least fifteen witnesses will be called on each side) will amount to upwards of £250.—You had better retain Mr. Backlegander.

"Re. Lords Oldacre and De la Zouch.

"Are the deeds herein engrossed? As it is a matter of magnitude, and the foundation of extensive and permanent family arrangements, pray let the greatest care be taken to secure accuracy. Please take special care of the stamps"—

Thus far had the worthy writer proceeded with his letter, when Waters made his appearance, delivering to him the declaration in ejectment which had been served upon old Jolter, and also the instructions concerning it which had been given by Mr. Aubrey. After Mr. Parkinson had asked particularly concerning Mr. Aubrey's health, and what had brought him so suddenly to Yatton, he cast his eye hastily over the "Declaration"—and at once came to the same conclusion concerning it which had been arrived at by Waters and Mr. Aubrey, viz. that it was another little arrow out of the quiver of the litigious Mr. Tompkins. As soon as Waters had left, Mr. Parkinson thus proceeded to conclude his letter:—

"Doe dem. Titmouse v. Roe.

"I enclose you Declaration herein, served yesterday. No doubt it is the disputed slip of waste land adjoining the cottage of old Jacob Jolter, a tenant of Mr. Aubrey of Yatton, that is sought to be recovered. I am quite sick of this petty annoyance, as also is Mr. Aubrey, who is now down here. Please call on Messrs. Quirk, Gammon, and Snap, of Saffron Hill, and settle the matter finally, on the best terms you can; it being Mr. Aubrey's wish that old Jolter (who is very feeble and timid) should suffer no inconvenience. I observe a new lessor of the plaintiff, with a very singular name. I suppose it is the name of some prior holder of the little property held by Mr. Tompkins.

"Hoping soon to hear from you (particularly about the marriage-settlement,) I am,

"Dear sirs,

"(With all the compliments of the season,)

"Yours truly, JAMES PARKINSON."

"P. S.—The oysters and codfish came to hand in excellent order, for which please accept my best thanks."

"I shall remit you in a day or two £100 on account."

This letter, lying among some twenty or thirty similar ones on Mr. Runnington's table, on the morning of its arrival in town, was opened in its turn; and then, in like manner, with most of the others, handed over to the managing clerk, in order that he might inquire into and report upon the state of the various matters of business referred to. As to the last item in Mr. Parkinson's letter, there seemed no particular reason for hurrying; so two or three days had elapsed before Mr. Runnington, having some other little business to transact with Messrs. Quirk, Gammon, and Snap, bethought himself of looking at his diary to see if there was not something else that he had to do with them. Putting, therefore, the declaration in *Doe d. Titmouse v. Roe* into his pocket, it was not long before he was at the office in Saffron Hill—and in the very room in it which had been the scene of several memorable interviews between Mr. Tittlebat Titmouse and Messrs. Quirk, Gammon, and Snap. I shall not detail what transpired on that occasion between Mr. Runnington and Messrs. Quirk, and Gammon, with whom he was closeted for nearly an hour. On quitting the office his cheek was flushed, and his manner somewhat excited. After walking a little way in a moody manner, and with slow step, he suddenly jumped into a hackney-coach, and within a quarter of an hour's time had secured an inside place in the Tallyho coach, which started for York at two o'clock that afternoon—much doubting within himself, the while, whether he ought not to have set off at once in a post-chaise and four. He then made one or two calls in the Temple; and, hurrying home to the office, made hasty arrangements for his sudden journey into Yorkshire. He was a calm and experienced man—in fact, a first-rate man of business; and you may be assured that this rapid and decisive movement of his had been the result of some very startling disclosure made to him by Messrs. Quirk and Gammon.

Now, let us glide back to the delightful solitude which we reluctantly quitted so short a time ago.

Mr. Aubrey was a studious and ambitious man; and in acceding so readily to the wishes of his wife and sister, to spend the Christmas recess at Yatton, had been not a little influenced by one consideration, which he had not thought it worth while to mention—namely, that it would afford him an opportunity of addressing himself with effect to a very important and complicated question, which was to be brought before the house shortly after its re-assembling, and of which he then knew scarcely any thing at all. For this purpose he had had a quantity of parliamentary papers, &c. &c. &c., packed up and sent down by coach; and he quite gloated over the prospect of their being duly deposited upon his table, in the tranquil leisure of his library, at Yatton. But quietly as he supposed all this to have been managed, Mrs. Aubrey and Kate had a most accurate knowledge of his movements; and resolved within themselves, (being therein comforted and assisted by old Mrs. Aubrey,) that, as at their instances Mr. Aubrey had come down to Yatton, so they would take care that he should

have not merely nominal, but real holidays. Unless he thought fit to rise at an early hour in the morning, (which Mrs. Aubrey, junior, took upon herself to say *she* would take care should never be the case,) it was decreed that he should not be allowed to waste more than two hours a day alone in his library. 'Twas therefore in vain for him to sit at breakfast with eye a-slant and thought laden brow, as if meditating a long day's seclusion: somehow or another, he never got above an hour to himself. He was often momentarily petulant on these occasions, and soon saw through the designs of his enemies; but he so heartily and tenderly loved them—so thoroughly appreciated the affection which dictated their little manoeuvres—that he soon surrendered at discretion, and, in fact, placed himself almost entirely at their mercy; resolving to make up for lost time on his return to town; and earnestly hoping that the interests of the nation would not suffer in the mean while. In short, the ladies of Yatton had agreed on their line of operations; that almost every night of their stay in the country should be devoted either to entertaining their neighbours or visiting them; and, as a preparatory movement, that the days (weather permitting) should be occupied with exercise in the open air; in making "morning" calls on neighbours at several miles' distance from the hall, and from each other; and from which they generally returned only in time enough to dress for dinner. As soon, indeed, as the leading country paper had announced the arrival at Yatton of "Charles Aubrey, Esq., M. P., and his family, for the Christmas recess," the efforts of Mrs. and Miss Aubrey were most powerfully seconded by a constant succession of visitors—by

"Troops of friends,"

as the lodge-keeper could have testified; for he and his buxom wife were continually opening and shutting the great gates. On the Monday after Christmas-day, (*i. e.* the day but one following,) came cantering up to the hall Lord De la Zouch and Mr. Delamere, of course staying to luncheon, and bearing a most pressing invitation from Lady De la Zouch, zealously backed by themselves, for the Aubreys to join a large party at Fotheringham Castle on New Year's Eve. This was accepted—a day and a night were thus gone at a swoop. The same thing happened with the Oldfields, their nearest neighbours; with Sir Percival Pickering at Luthington Court, where was a superb new picture-gallery to be critically inspected by Mr. Aubrey; the Earl of Oldacre, a college friend of Mr. Aubrey's—the venerable Lady Stratton, the earliest friend and schoolfellow of old Mrs. Aubrey, and so forth. Then Kate had several visits to pay on her own account: and, being fond of horseback, she did not like riding about the country with only a groom in attendance on her; so her brother *must* accompany her on these occasions. The first week of their stay in the country was devoted to visiting their neighbours and friends in the way I have stated; the next was to be spent in receiving them at Yatton, during which time the old hall was to ring with merry hospitality.

Then there was a little world of other matters to occupy Mr. Aubrey's attention, and which naturally crowded upon him, living so little at Yatton as he had latterly. He often had a kind of levee of his humbler neighbours, tenants, and constituents; and on these occasions his real goodness of nature, his simplicity, his patience, his forbearance, his sweetness of temper, his

benevolence, shone conspicuous. With all these more endearing qualities, there was yet a placid dignity about him that chilled undue familiarity, and repelled presumption. He had here no motive or occasion for ostentation, or, as it is called, popularity-hunting. In a sense it might be said of him, that he was "monarch of all he surveyed." It is true, he was member for the borough—an honour, however, for which he was indebted to the natural influence of his commanding position—one which left him his own master, not converting him into a paltry delegate, hand-cuffed by pledges on public questions, and laden with injunctions concerning petty local interests only—liable, moreover, to be called to an account at any moment by ignorant and insolent demagogues—but a member of parliament training to become a statesman, possessed of a free will, and therefore capable of independent and enlightened deliberations; placed by his fortune above the reach of temptation—but I shall not go any further, for the portraiture of a member of parliament of those days suggests such a humiliating and bitter contrast, that I shall not ruffle either my own or my reader's temper by touching it any further. On the occasions I have been alluding to, Mr. Aubrey was not only condescending and generous, but practically acute and discriminating; qualities of his, these latter, so well known, however, as to leave him at length scarce any opportunities of exercising them. His quiet but decisive interference put an end to a number of local unpleasantnesses and annoyances, and caused his increasing absence from Yatton to be very deeply regretted. Was a lad or a wench taking to idle and dissolute courses? A kind, or, as the occasion required, a stern expostulation of his—for he was a justice of the peace moreover—brought them to their senses. He had a very happy knack of reasoning and laughing quarrelsome neighbours into reconciliation and good humour. He had a very keen eye after the practical details of agriculture; was equally quick at detecting an inconvenience, and appreciating—sometimes even suggesting—a remedy; and had, on several occasions, brought such knowledge to bear very effectively upon discussions in parliament. His constituents, few in number undoubtedly, and humble, were quite satisfied with and proud of their member; and his unexpected appearance diffused among them real and general satisfaction. As a landlord, he was beloved by his numerous tenantry; and well he might—for never was there so easy and liberal a landlord: he might at any time have increased his rental by £1500 or £2000 a year, as his steward frequently intimated to him—but in vain. "Ten thousand a-year," said Mr. Aubrey, "is far more than my necessities require—it affords me and my family every luxury that I can conceive of; and its magnitude reminds me constantly that hereafter I shall be called upon to give a very strict and solemn account of my stewardship." I would I had time to complete, as it ought to be completed, this portraiture of a true Christian gentleman!

As he rode up to the Hare and Hounds Inn, at Grilston, one morning, to transact some little business, and also to look in on the Farmer's Club, which was then holding one of its fortnightly meetings, (all touching their hats and bowing to him on each side of the long street as he slowly passed up it,) he perceived one of his horse's feet limp a little. On dismounting, therefore, he stopped to see what was the matter, while his groom took up the foot to examine it.

"Dey-vilish fine horse," exclaimed the voice of one standing close beside him, and in a tone of most dis-

agreeable confidence. The exclamation was addressed to Mr. Aubrey; who, on turning to the speaker, beheld a young man—'twas Titmouse—dressed in a style of the most extravagant absurdity. One hand was stuck into the hinder pocket of a stylish top coat, (the everlasting tip of a white pocket handkerchief glistening at the mouth of his breast pocket;) the other held a cigar to his mouth, from which, as he addressed Mr. Aubrey with an air of provoking impudence, he slowly expelled the smoke that he had inhaled. Mr. Aubrey bowed with a cold and surprised air, without replying, at the same time wondering where he had seen the ridiculous object before.

"The horses in these parts ar'n't to be compared with them at London—eh, sir!" quoth Titmouse, approaching closer to Mr. Aubrey and his groom, to see what the latter was doing—who, on hearing Titmouse's last sally, gave him a very significant look.

"I'm afraid the people here won't relish your remarks, sir!" replied Mr. Aubrey, hardly able to forbear a smile, at the same time calmly scanning the figure of his companion from head to foot.

"Who cares?" inquired Titmouse, with a very energetic oath. At this moment up came a farmer, who, observing Mr. Aubrey, made him a very low bow. Mr. Aubrey's attention being at the moment occupied with Titmouse, he did not observe the salutation; not so with Titmouse, who acknowledged it by taking off his hat with great grace! Mr. Aubrey followed in to the house, having ordered his groom to bring back the horse in an hour's time. "Pray," said he mildly to the landlady, "who is that person smoking the cigar outside?"

"Why, sir, he's a Mr. Brown; and has another with him here—who's going up to London by this afternoon's coach—this one stays behind a day or two longer. They're queer people, sir. Such dandies! Do nothing but smoke, and drink brandy and water, sir; only that t'other writes a good deal."

"Well, I wish you would remind him," said Mr. Aubrey, smiling, "that, if he thinks fit to speak to me again, I am a magistrate, and have the power of fining him five shillings for every oath he utters."

"What! sir, has he been speaking to you? Well, I never—he's the most forward little upstart I ever seed!" said she, dropping her voice; "and he sooner he takes himself off from here the better; for he's always winking at the maids and talking impudence to them. I've box his ears, I warrant him, one of these times!" Mr. Aubrey smiled, and went up stairs.

"There don't seem much wrong," quoth Titmouse to the groom, with a condescending air, as soon as Mr. Aubrey had entered the house.

"Much you know about it, I don't guess!" quoth Sam, with a contemptuous smile.

"Who's your master, fellow?"—inquired Titmouse, knocking off the ashes from the tip of his cigar.

"A gentleman. What's yours?"

"Curse your impudence, you vagabond!" — The words were hardly out of his mouth before Sam, with a slight tap of his hand, had knocked Titmouse's glossy hat off his head, and Titmouse's purple-hued hair stood exposed to view, provoking the jeers and laughter of one or two by-standers. Titmouse appeared about to strike the groom; who, hastily giving the bridles of his horses into the hands of an ostler, threw himself into boxing attitude; and, being a clean, tight-built, stout young fellow, looked a very formidable object, as he came squaring nearer and nearer to the dismayed Titmouse;

and on behalf of the outraged honour of all the horses of Yorkshire, was just going to let fly his *one-two*, when a sharp tapping at the bow-window overhead startled him for a moment, interrupting his warlike demonstrations; and, on casting up his eyes, he beheld the threatening figure of his master, who was shaking his whip at him. He dropped his guard, touched his hat very humbly, and resumed his horse's bridles; muttering, however, to Titmouse, "If thou'rt a man, come down into t' yard, and I'll make thee think a horse kicked thee, a liar as thou art!"

"Who's that gentleman gone up stairs?" inquired Titmouse of the landlady, after he had sneaked into the inn.

"Squire Aubrey, of Yatton." Titmouse's face, previously very pale, flushed all over. "Ay, ay, thou must be chattering to the grand folks, and thou'st nearly put thy foot into 't at last, I can tell thee; for that's a magistrate, and thou'st been a swearing afore him." Titmouse smiled rather faintly; and entering the parlour, affected to be engaged with a county newspaper; and he remained very quiet for upwards of an hour, not venturing out of the room till he had seen off Mr. Aubrey and his formidable Sam.

It was the hunting season; but Mr. Aubrey, though he had as fine horses as were to be found in the country, and which were always at the service of his friends, partly from want of inclination, and partly from the delicacy of his constitution, never shared in the sports of the field. Now and then, however, he rode to cover, to see the hounds throw off, and exchange greetings with a great number of his friends and neighbours, on such occasions collected together. This he did the morning after that on which he had visited Grilston, accompanied, at their earnest entreaty, by Mrs. Aubrey and Kate. I am not painting angels, but describing frail human nature; and truth forces me to say, that Kate knew pretty well that on such occasions she appeared to no little advantage. I protest I love her not the less for it—but is there a beautiful woman under the sun who is not aware of her charms; and of the effect they produce upon our sex? Pooh! I never will believe to the contrary. In Kate's composition this ingredient was but an imperceptible alloy in virgin gold. Now, how was it that she came to think of this hunting appointment? I do not exactly know; but I recollect that when Lord De la Zouch last called at Yatton, he happened to mention it at lunch, and to say that he and one Geoffrey Lovel Delamere—but however that may be, behold, on a bright Thursday morning, Aubrey and his two lovely companions made their welcome appearance at the field, all superbly mounted, and most cordially greeted by all present. Miss Aubrey attracted universal admiration; but there was one handsome youngster, his well-formed figure showing to great advantage in his new scarlet coat and spotless cords, that made a point of challenging her special notice, and in doing so, attracting that of all his envious fellow-sportsmen; and that was Delamere. He seemed, indeed, infinitely more taken up with the little party from Yatton than with the serious business of the day. His horse, however, had an eye to business; and with erected ears, catching the first welcome signal sooner than its gallant rider, sprung off like light, and would have left its abstracted rider behind, had he not been a first-rate seat. In fact, Kate herself was not quite sufficiently on her guard; and her eager filly suddenly put in requisition all her rider's little strength and skill to rein her in—which having done, Kate's eye looked

rather anxiously after her late companion, who, however, had already cleared the first hedge, and was fast making up to the scattering scarlet crowd. Oh, the bright exhilarating scene!

"Heigh ho!" said Kate, with a slight sigh, as soon as Delamere had disappeared—"I was very nearly off."

"So was somebody else, Kate!" said Mrs. Aubrey, with a sly smile.

"This is a very cool contrivance of yours, Kate,—bringing us here this morning," said her brother, rather gravely.

"What *do* you mean, Charles?" she inquired, slightly reddening. He good-naturedly tapped her shoulder with his whip, laughed, urged his horse into a canter, and they were all soon on their way to General Grim, a friend of the late Mr. Aubrey's.

The party assembled on New Year's Eve at Fotheringham Castle, the residence of Lord De la Zouch, was numerous and brilliant. The Aubreys arrived about five o'clock; and on their emerging from their chambers into the drawing-room, about half past six—Mr. Aubrey leading in his lovely wife and his very beautiful sister—they attracted general attention. He himself looked handsome, for the brisk country air had brought out a glow upon his too frequently sallow countenance—sallow with the unwholesome atmosphere, the late hours, the wasting excitement of the house of commons; and his smile was cheerful, his eye bright and penetrating. There is nothing that makes such quick triumphant way in English society as the promise of speedy political distinction. It will supply to its happy possessor the want of family and fortune—it rapidly melts away all distinctions; the obscure but eloquent commoner finds himself suddenly standing in the rarefied atmosphere of privilege and exclusiveness—the familiar equal, often the conscious superior, of the haughtiest peer of the realm. A single successful speech in the house of commons, opens before its utterer the shining doors of fashion and greatness, as if by magic. It is as if it were rown stepping into its palace, welcomed by gay crowds of eager obsequious expectants. Who would not press forward to grasp in anxious welcome the hand that, in a few short years, may dispense the glittering baubles sighed after by the great, and the more substantial patronage of office, which may point public opinion in any direction? But, to go no further, what if to all this be added a previous position in society! such as that occupied by Mr. Aubrey! There were several very fine women, married and single, in that splendid drawing-room; but there were two girls, in very different styles of beauty, who were soon allowed by all present to carry off the palm between them—I mean Miss Aubrey and Lady Caroline Caversham, the only daughter of the Marchioness of Redborough, both of whom were on a visit at the castle of some duration. Lady Caroline and Miss Aubrey were of about the same age, and dressed almost exactly alike, viz. in white satin; only Lady Caroline wore a brilliant diamond necklace, whereas Kate had not a single ornament.

Lady Caroline was a trifle the taller, and had a very stately carriage. Her hair was black as jet—her features were refined and delicate; but they wore a very cold, haughty expression. After a glance at her half-closed eyes, and the swan-like curve of her snowy neck, you unconsciously withdrew from her, as from an inaccessible beauty. The more you looked at her, the more she satisfied your critical scrutiny; but your *feelings* went not out towards her—they were, in a manner, chilled



and repulsed. Look, now, at our own Kate Aubrey—nay, never fear to place her beside yon supercilious divinity—look at her, and your heart acknowledges her loveliness; your soul thrills at sight of her bewitching blue eyes—eyes now sparkling with excitement, then languishing with softness, in accordance with the varying emotions of a sensitive nature—a most susceptible heart. How her sunny curls harmonise with the delicacy and richness of her complexion! Her figure, observe, is rather fuller than her rival's—stay, don't let your eyes settle so intently upon her budding form, or you will confuse Kate—turn away, or she will shrink from you like the sensitive plant. Lady Caroline seems the exquisite but frigid production of skilful statuary, who had caught a divinity in the very act of disdainfully setting her foot for the first time upon this poor earth of ours; but Kate is a living and breathing beauty—as it were, fresh from the hand of God himself.

Kate was very affectionately greeted by Lady De la Zouch, a lofty and dignified woman of about fifty; so also by Lord De la Zouch; but when young Delamere welcomed her with a palpable embarrassment of manner, a more brilliant colour stole into her cheek, and a keen observer might have noticed a little, rapid, undulating motion in her bosom, which told of some inward emotion. And a keen observer Kate at that moment had in her beautiful rival; from whose cheek, as that of Kate deepened in its roseate bloom, faded away the colour entirely, leaving it the hue of the lily. Her drooping eyelids could scarcely conceal the glances of alarm and anger which she darted at her plainly successful rival in the affections of the future Lord De la Zouch. Kate was quickly aware of this state of matters; and it required no little self-control to appear *un-aware* of it. Delamere took her down to dinner; in doing which he defied the laws of etiquette in a little point of precedence; and he seated himself beside her, and paid her such pointed attentions as at length really distressed her; and she was quite relieved when the time came for the ladies to withdraw. That she had not a secret yearning towards Delamere, the frequent companion of her early days, I cannot assert, because I know it would be contrary to the fact. Circumstances had kept him on the continent for more than a year between the period of his quitting Eton and going to Oxford, where another twelvemonth had slipped away without his visiting Yorkshire: thus two years had elapsed—and behold Kate had become a woman, and he a man! They had mutual predispositions towards each other, and 'twas mere accident which of them first manifested symptoms of fondness for the other—the same result must have followed, namely (to use a great word) reciprocation. Lord and Lady De la Zouch idolised their son, and were old and very firm friends of the Aubrey family; and, if Delamere really formed an attachment to one of Miss Aubrey's beauty, accomplishments, talent, amiability, and good family—why should he not be gratified? Kate, whether she would or not, was set down to the piano, Lady Caroline accompanying her on the harp—on which she usually performed with mingled skill and grace; but, on the present occasion, both the fair performers found fault with their instruments—then with themselves—and presently gave up the attempt in despair. But when, at a later period of the evening, Kate's spirits had been a little exhilarated with dancing, and she sat down, at Lord De la Zouch's request, and gave that exquisite song from the *Tempest*,—"Where the bee sucks,"—all the witchery of her voice and manner had returned; and as for

Delamere, he would have given the world to marry her that minute, and so for ever extinguish the hopes of—as he imagined—two or three nascent competitors for the beautiful prize then present.

That Kate was good as beautiful, the following little incident, which happened to her on the ensuing evening, will show. There was a girl in the village at Yotton, about sixteen or seventeen years old, called Phoebe Williams; a very pretty girl, and who had spent about two years at the hall as a laundry-maid, but had been obliged, some few months before the time I am speaking of, to return to her parents in the village, ill of a decline. She had been a sweet-tempered girl in her situation, and all her fellow-servants felt great interest in her, as also did Miss Aubrey. Mrs. Aubrey sent her daily, jellies, sago, and other such matters, suitable for the poor girl's condition; and about a quarter of an hour after her return from Fotheringham, Miss Aubrey, finding one of the female servants about to set off with some of the above-mentioned articles, and hearing that poor Phoebe was getting rapidly worse, instead of retiring to her room to undress, slipped on an additional shawl, and resolved to accompany the servant to the village. She said not a word to either her mother, her sister-in-law, or her brother; but simply left word with her maid where she was going, and that she should quickly return. It was snowing smartly when Kate set off; but she cared not, hurried on by the impulse of kindness, which led her to pay perhaps a last visit to the humble sufferer. She walked alongside of the elderly female servant, asking her a number of questions about Phoebe, and her sorrowing father and mother. It was nearly dark as they quitted the park gates, and snowing, if any thing, faster than when they had left the hall. Kate, wrapping her shawl still closer around her slender figure, and her face pretty well protected by her veil, hurried on, and they soon reached Williams's cottage. Its humble tenants were, as may be imagined, not a little surprised at her appearance at such an hour, and in such inclement weather, and so apparently unattended. Poor Phoebe, worn to a shadow, was sitting opposite the fire, in a little wooden arm-chair, and propped up by a pillow. She trembled, and her lips moved on seeing Miss Aubrey, who, sitting down on a stool beside her, after laying aside her snow-whitened shawl and bonnet, spoke to her in the most gentle and soothing strain imaginable. What a contrast in their two figures! 'Twould have been no violent stretch of imagination to say, that Catharine Aubrey at that moment looked like a ministering angel sent to comfort the wretched sufferer in her extremity. Phoebe's father and mother stood on each side of the little fireplace, gazing with tearful eyes upon their only child, soon about to depart from them for ever. The poor girl was indeed a touching object. She had been very pretty, but now her face was white and wofully emaciated—the dread impress of consumption was upon it. Her wasted fingers were clasped together on her lap, holding between them a little handkerchief, with which, evidently with great effort, she occasionally wiped the dampness from her face.

"You're very good, ma'am," she whispered, "to come to see me, and so late. They say it's a sad cold night."

"I heard, Phoebe, that you were not so well, and I thought I would just step along with Margaret, who has brought you some more jelly. Did you like the last?"

"Y-es, ma'am," she replied, hesitatingly; "but it's

very hard for me to swallow any thing now, my throat feels so sore." Here her mother shook her head and looked aside; for the doctor had only that morning explained to her the nature of the distressing symptom which her daughter was alluding to—as evidencing the very last stage of her fatal disorder.

"I'm very sorry to hear you say so, Phæbe," replied Miss Aubrey. "Do you think there's any thing else that Mrs. Jackson could make for you?"

"No, ma'am, thank you; I feel it's no use trying to swallow any thing more."

"While there's life," said Kate, in a subdued, hesitating tone, "there's hope—they say." Phæbe shook her head mournfully. "Don't stop long, dear lady—it's getting very late for you to be out alone. Father will go!"

"Never mind me, Phæbe—I can take care of myself. I hope you mind what good Dr. Tatnam says to you? You know this sickness is from God, Phæbe. He knows what is best for his creatures."

"Thank God, ma'am, I feel resigned. I know it is God's will; but I am very sorry for poor father and mother—they'll be so lone like, when they don't see Phæbe about." Her father gazed intently at her, and the tears ran trickling down his cheeks; her mother put her apron before her face, and shook her head in silent anguish. Miss Aubrey did not speak for a few moments. "I see you have been reading the prayer-book mamma gave you when you were at the Hall," said she at length, observing the little volume lying open on Phæbe's lap.

"Yes, ma'am—I was *trying*; but somehow, lately, I can't read, for there's a kind of mist comes over my eyes, and I can't see."

"That's weakness, Phæbe," said Miss Aubrey, quickly but tremulously.

"May I make bold, ma'am," commenced Phæbe, languidly, after a hesitating pause, "to ask you to read the little psalm I was trying to read a while ago? I should so like to hear you."

"I'll try, Phæbe," said Miss Aubrey, taking the book, which was open at the sixth psalm. 'Twas a severe trial, for her feelings were not a little excited already. But how could she refuse the dying girl? So she began, a little indistinctly, in a very low tone, and with frequent pauses; for the tears every now and then quite obscured her sight. She managed, however, to get as far as the sixth verse, which was thus:—

*"I am weary of my groaning: every night wash I my bed, and water my couch with tears: my beauty is gone for very trouble."*

Here Kate's voice suddenly stopped. She buried her face for a moment or two in her handkerchief, and said hastily, "I can't read any more, Phæbe!" Every one in the little room was in tears except poor Phæbe, who seemed past that.

"It's time for me to go, now, Phæbe. We'll send some one early in the morning to know how you are," said Miss Aubrey, rising and putting on her bonnet and shawl. She contrived to beckon Phæbe's mother to the back of the room, and silently slipped a couple of guineas into her hands; for she knew the mournful occasion there would soon be for such assistance! She then left, peremptorily declining the attendance of Phæbe's father—saying that it *must* be dark when she could not find the way to the Hall, which was almost in a straight line from the cottage, and little more than a quarter of a mile off. It was very much darker, and it still snowed, though

not so thickly as when she had come. She and Margaret walked side by side, at a quick pace, talking together about poor Phæbe. Just as she was approaching the extremity of the village, nearest the park—

"Ah! my lovely gals!" exclaimed a voice, in a low but most offensive tone—"alone? How uncommon!"—Miss Aubrey for a moment seemed thunderstruck at so sudden and unprecedented an occurrence: then she hurried on, with a beating heart, whispering to Margaret to keep close to her, and not to be alarmed. The speaker, however, kept pace with them.

"Lovely gals!—wish I'd an umbrella, my angels!—Take my arm! Ah! Pretty gals!"

"Who are you, sir?" at length exclaimed Kate, spitefully, suddenly stopping and turning to the rude speaker.

"Who else should it be but Tittlebat Titmouse. Who am I? Ah, ha! Lovely gals! one that loves the pretty gals."

"Do you know, fellow, who I am?" inquired Miss Aubrey indignantly, flinging aside her veil, and disclosing her beautiful face, white as death, but indistinctly visible in the darkness, to her insolent assailant.

"No, 'pon my soul, no; but—lovely gal! lovely gal!—'pon my life, spirited gal!—do you no harm!—Take my arm!"

"Wretch!—ruffian!—how dare you insult a lady in this manner! Do you know who I am? My name, sir, is Aubrey—I am Miss Aubrey of the Hall! Do not think!"

Titmouse felt as if he were on the point of dropping down dead at that moment, with amazement and terror; and when Miss Aubrey's servant screamed out at the top of her voice, "Help!—help, there!" Titmouse, without uttering a syllable more, took to his heels, just as the door of a cottage, at only a few yards' distance, opened, and out rushed a strapping farmer, shouting—"Hey! what be t'matter?" You may guess his astonishment on discovering Miss Aubrey, and his fury at learning the cause of her alarm. Out of doors he pelted, without his hat, uttering a volley of fearful imprecations, and calling on the unseen miscreant to come forward; for whom it was lucky that he had time to escape from a pair of fists that in a minute or two would have beaten his little carcass into a jelly! Miss Aubrey was so overcome by the shock she had suffered, that but for a glass of water she might have fainted. As soon as she had a little recovered from her agitation, she set off home, accompanied by Margaret, and followed very closely by the farmer, with a tremendous knotted stick under his arm—(he wanted to have taken his double-barreled gun)—and thus she soon reached the Hall, not a little tired and agitated. This little incident, however, she kept to herself, and enjoined her two attendants to do the same; for she knew the distress it would have occasioned those whom she loved. As it was, she was somewhat sharply rebuked by her mother and brother, who had just sent two men out in quest of her, and whom it was singular that she should have missed. This is not the place to give an account of the eccentric movements of our friend Titmouse; still there can be no harm in my just mentioning that the sight of Miss Aubrey on horseback had half maddened the little fool; her image had never been effaced from his memory since the occasion on which, as already explained, he had first seen her; and as soon as he had ascertained, through Snap's inquiries, who she was, he became more frenzied in the matter than before, because he thought he now saw a probability of obtain-

ing her. "If like children," says Edmund Burke, "we will cry for the moon, why like children we must—cry on." Whether this was not something like the position of Mr. Tittlebat Titmouse, in his passion for CATHERINE AUBREY, the reader can judge. He had unbosomed himself in the matter to his confidential adviser Mr. Snap; who, having accomplished his errand, had the day before returned to town, very much against his will, leaving Titmouse behind him, to bring about, by his own delicate and skilful management, a union between himself, as the future Lord of Yatton, and the beautiful sister of its present occupant.

Mr. Aubrey and Kate were sitting together playing at chess, about eight o'clock in the evening; Dr. Tatnam and Mrs. Aubrey, junior, looking on with much interest; old Mrs. Aubrey being busily engaged writing. Mr. Aubrey was sadly an overmatch for poor Kate—he being in fact a first-rate player; and her soft white hand had been hovering over the half-dozen chessmen she had left, uncertain which of them to move, for nearly two minutes, her chin resting on the other hand, and her face wearing a very puzzled expression. "Come, Kate," said every now and then her brother, with that calm victorious smile which at such a moment would have tried any but so sweet a temper as his sister's. "If I were you, Miss Aubrey," was perpetually exclaiming Dr. Tatnam, knowing as much about the game the while as the little Marlborough spaniel lying asleep at Miss Aubrey's feet. "Oh dear!" said Kate, at length, with a sigh, "I really don't see how to escape."

"Who can that be?" exclaimed Mrs. Aubrey, looking up and listening to the sound of carriage wheels.

"Never mind," said her husband, who was interested in the game—"come, come, Kate." A few minutes afterwards a servant made his appearance, and coming up to Mr. Aubrey, told him that Mr. Parkinson and another gentleman had called, and were waiting in the library to speak to him on business.

"What can they want at this hour?" exclaimed Mr. Aubrey, absently, intently watching an expected move of his sister's, which would have decided the game. At length she made her long-meditated descent, in quite an unexpected quarter.

"Check-mate!" she exclaimed, with infinite glee.

"Ah!" cried he, rising, with a slightly surprised and chagrined air, "I'm ruined! Now, try your hand on the doctor, while I go and speak to these people. I wonder what can possibly have brought them here. Oh, I see—I see; 'tis probably about Miss Evelyn's marriage-settlement—I'm to be one her trustees." With this he left the room, and presently entered the library, where were two gentlemen, one of whom, a stranger, was in the act of pulling off his great-coat. It was Mr. Runnington; a tall, thin, elderly man, with short gray hair—his countenance bespeaking the calm, acute, clear-headed man of business. The other was Mr. Parkinson; a plain, substantial-looking, hard-headed, country attorney.

"Mr. Runnington, my London agent, sir," said he to Mr. Aubrey, as the latter entered. Mr. Aubrey bowed.

"Pray, gentlemen, be seated," he replied, taking a chair beside them. "Why, Parkinson, you look very serious—both of you. What is the matter?" he inquired, surprisedly.

"Mr. Runnington, sir, has arrived, most unexpectedly to me, only an hour or two ago from London, on business of the last importance to you."

"Well, what is it? Pray, say at once what it is—I am all attention," said Mr. Aubrey, anxiously.

"Do you happen to remember sending Waters to me on Monday or Tuesday last, with a paper which had been served by some one on old Jolter?"

"Certainly," replied Mr. Aubrey, after a moment's consideration.

"Mr. Runnington's errand is connected with that document."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Aubrey, apparently a little relieved. "I assure you, gentlemen, you very greatly over-estimate the importance I attach to any thing that such a troublesome person as Mr. Tomkins can do, if I am right in supposing that it is he who—Well, then, what is the matter?" he inquired quickly, observing Mr. Parkinson shake his head, and interchange a grave look with Mr. Runnington; "you cannot think how you would oblige me by being explicit."

"This paper," said Mr. Runnington, holding up that which Mr. Aubrey at once recollected as the one on which he had cast his eye on its being handed to him by Waters, "is a Declaration in Ejectment with which Mr. Tomkins has nothing whatever to do. It is served virtually on you, and you are the real defendant."

"So I apprehend I was in the former trumpery action."

"Do you recollect, Mr. Aubrey," said Mr. Parkinson, with much anxiety, "several years ago, some serious conversation which you and I had together, when I was preparing your marriage-settlements?"

Mr. Aubrey's face was suddenly blanched.

"The matters we then discussed have suddenly acquired immense importance. This paper occasions us, on your account, the deepest anxiety." Mr. Aubrey continued silent, gazing on Mr. Parkinson with intensity. "Supposing, from a hasty glance at it, and from the message accompanying it, that it was merely another action of Tomkins' about the slip of waste land attached to Jolter's cottage, I sent up to London to Messrs. Runnington, requesting them to call on the plaintiff's attorneys, and settle the action. He did so; and perhaps you will explain the rest," said Mr. Parkinson to Mr. Runnington.

"Certainly," said that gentleman. "I called accordingly yesterday morning on Messrs. Quirk, Gammon, and Snap—they are a very well known, but not very popular firm in the profession, and in a very few minutes my misconception of the nature of the business I had called to settle was set right. In short," he paused, as if distressed at the intelligence he was about to communicate.

"Oh, pray, pray go on, sir," said Mr. Aubrey, in a low tone.

"I am no stranger, sir, to your firmness of character; but I shall have to tax it, I fear, to its uttermost. To come at once to the point—they told me that I might undoubtedly settle the matter if you would consent to give up immediate possession of the Yatton estate, and account for the meagre profits to their client, the right heir—as they contend—a Mr. Tittlebat Titmouse." Mr. Aubrey sunk back in his chair, overcome, for an instant, by this dreadful and astounding intelligence; and all three of them preserved silence for more than a minute. Mr. Runnington was a man of a very feeling heart. In the course of his great practice, he had had to encounter many distressing scenes; but probably none of them had equaled that in which, at the earnest entreaty of Mr. Parkinson, who distrusted his own self-possession, he now bore a leading part. The two attorneys interchanged frequent looks of deep sympathy for their unfor-

tunste client, who seemed as if stunned by the intelligence they had brought him.

"I felt it my duty to lose not an instant in coming down to Yatton," resumed Mr. Runnington, observing Mr. Aubrey's eye again directed inquiringly towards him; "for Messrs. Quirk, Gammon, and Snap are very dangerous people to deal with, and must be encountered promptly, and with the greatest possible caution. The moment that I had left them, I hastened to the Temple, to retain for you Mr. Subtle, the leader of the Northern Circuit; but they had been beforehand with me, and retained him nearly three months ago, together with another eminent king's counsel on the circuit. Under these circumstances, I lost no time in giving a special retainer to the attorney-general, in which I trust I have done right, and in retaining as junior a gentleman whom I consider to be incomparably the ablest lawyer on the circuit."

"Did they say any thing concerning the nature of their client's title?" inquired Mr. Aubrey, in a languid tone; but he was perfectly calm and collected.

"Very little. If they had been *never* so precise, of course I should have distrusted every word they said. They certainly mentioned that they had had the first conveyancing opinion in the kingdom, which concurred in favour of their client; that they had been for months prepared at all points, and accident only had delayed their commencing proceedings till now."

"Did you make any inquiries as to who the claimant was?" inquired Mr. Aubrey.

"Yes; but all I could learn was, that they had discovered him by mere accident; and that he was in very obscure and distressed circumstances. I tried to discover by what means they proposed to commence and carry on so expensive a contest; but they smiled significantly, and were silent." Another long pause ensued, during which Mr. Aubrey was evidently silently struggling with very agitating emotions.

"What is the meaning of their affecting to seek the recovery of only one insignificant portion of the property?" he inquired.

"It is their own choice—it may be from considerations of mere convenience. The title by which they may succeed in recovering what they at present go for, will avail to recover every acre of the estate, and the present action will consequently decide every thing!"

"And suppose the worst—that they are successful: what is to be said about the rental which I have been receiving all this time—ten thousand a-year?" inquired Mr. Aubrey, looking as if he dreaded to hear his question answered.

"Oh! that's quite an after consideration—let us first fight the battle."

"I beg, Mr. Runnington, that you will withhold nothing from me," said Mr. Aubrey, with a faltering voice. "To what extent shall I be liable?"

Mr. Runnington paused.

"I am afraid that *all* the mesne profits, as they are called, which you have received,"—commenced Mr. Parkinson—

"No, no," interrupted Mr. Runnington; "I have been turning that over in my mind, and I think that the statute of limitations will bar all but the last six years."

"Why, *that* will be sixty thousand pounds!" interrupted Mr. Aubrey, with a look of sudden despair. "Gracious God, that is perfectly frightful!—frightful! If I lose Yatton, I shall not have a place to put my head

in—not one farthing to support myself with! And yet to have to make up *sixty thousand pounds!*" The perspiration stood upon his forehead, and his eye was laden with alarm and agony. He slowly rose from his chair, and bolted the door, that they might not, at such an agitating moment, be surprised or disturbed by any of the family.

"I suppose," said he, in a faint and tremulous tone, "that if this claim succeed, my mother also will share my fate."

They shook their heads in silence.

"Permit me to suggest," said Mr. Runnington, in a tone of the most respectful sympathy, "that sufficient for the day is the evil thereof."

"But the *WREATH* follows!" said Mr. Aubrey, with a visible tremor; and his voice made the hearts of his companions thrill within them. "Mine is really a fearful case! I and mine, I feel, are become suddenly beggars. We are *trespassers* at Yatton. We have been unjustly enjoying the rights of others."

"My dear Mr. Aubrey," said Mr. Parkinson, earnestly, "that remains to be proved. We really are getting on far too fast. One would think that the jury had already returned a verdict against us—that judgment had been signed—and that the sheriff was coming in the morning to execute the writ of possession in favour of our opponent." This was well meant by the speaker; but surely it was like talking of the machinery of the ghastly guillotine to the wretch in shivering expectation of suffering by it on the morrow. An involuntary shudder ran through Mr. Aubrey. "Sixty thousand pounds!" he exclaimed, rising and walking to and fro. "Why, I am ruined beyond all redemption! How can I ever satisfy it?" Again he paced the room several times, in silent agony. The inward prayer which he then offered up to God, for calmness and fortitude, seemed to have been, in a measure, answered; and he presently resumed his seat. "I have, for these several days past, had a strange sense of impending calamity," said he, in an infinitely more tranquil tone than before—"I have been equally unable to account for or get rid of it. It may be an intimation from heaven; I bow to its will!"

"We must remember," said Mr. Runnington, "that '*possession is nine-tenths of the law*;' which means, that your mere possession will entitle you to retain it against all the world, till a stronger title than yours to the right of possession be made out. You stand on a mountain; and it is for your adversary to displace you, not by showing merely that you have no real title, but that *he has*. If he could prove all your title-deeds to be merely waste paper—that in fact you have no more title than I have—he could not advance his own case an inch; he must *first* establish in himself a clear and independent title; so that you are entirely on the defensive; and rely upon it, that so acute and profound a lawyer as the attorney-general will impose every difficulty on"—

"God forbid that any unconscientious advantage should be taken on my behalf!" said Mr. Aubrey. Mr. Runnington and Mr. Parkinson both opened their eyes pretty wide at this sally: the latter could not understand but that every thing was fair in war; the former saw and appreciated the nobility of soul which had dictated the exclamation.

"I suppose the affair will soon become public," said Mr. Aubrey, with an air of profound depression.

"Your position in the county, your eminence in public life, the singularity of the case, and the magnitude of the stake—all are circumstances undoubtedly calculated



soon to urge the affair before the notice of the public," said Mr. Runnington.

"Good God, who is to break the disastrous intelligence to my family!" exclaimed Mr. Aubrey, hiding his face in his hands. "Something, I suppose," he presently added, with forced calmness, "must be done immediately."

"Undoubtedly. Mr. Parkinson and I will immediately proceed to examine your title-deeds, the greater portion of which are, I understand, here in the Hall, and the rest at Mr. Parkinson's; and prepare, without delay, a case for the opinion of the attorney-general and also of some eminent conveyancer. Who, by the way," said Mr. Runnington, addressing Mr. Parkinson—"who was the conveyancer that had the abstracts before him, on preparing Mr. Aubrey's marriage-settlement?"

"Oh, you are alluding to the '*Opinion*!' I mentioned to you this evening!" inquired Mr. Parkinson.—"I have it at my house, and will show it you in the morning. The doubt he expressed on one or two points gave me, I recollect, no little uneasiness—as you may remember, Mr. Aubrey."

"I certainly do," he replied, with a profound sigh; "but though what you said reminded me of something or another that I had heard when a mere boy, I thought no more of it. I think you told me that the gentleman who wrote the opinion was a nervous fidgety man, always raising difficulties in his client's titles—and, one way or another, the thing never gave me any concern—never even occurred to my thoughts, till to-day."

"You see, if only one link, or part of a link, in a chain, is infirm," said Mr. Runnington—"however remote."

"You will take a little refreshment, gentlemen, after your journey!" said Mr. Aubrey, suddenly interrupting him—glad of the opportunity it would afford him of reviving his own exhausted spirits by a little wine, before returning to the drawing-room. He swallowed several glasses of wine without any sensible effect; and the bearers of the dreadful intelligence just communicated to the reader, after a promise by Mr. Aubrey to drive over to Grilston early in the morning, and bring such of his title-deeds as were then at the Hall, took their departure; leaving him considerably calmer, but with a fearful oppression at his heart. Long accustomed to control his feelings, he exerted himself to the utmost on the present occasion—and almost entirely succeeded. His face, however, on re-entering the drawing-room, which his mother, attended by Kate, had quitted for her bedroom, somewhat alarmed Mrs. Aubrey; whom, however, he at once quieted, by saying that he certainly *had* been annoyed—"excessively annoyed" at a communication just made to him; and which might—in fact—prevent his sitting again for Yatton." "There, doctor, am I not right?" said Mrs. Aubrey, appealing to Dr. Tatham—"did I not tell you that this was something connected with politics? Charles, I do *hate* politics—give me a quiet home!" A pang shot through Mr. Aubrey's heart; but he felt that he had, for the present, succeeded in his object.

Mr. Aubrey's distracted mind was indeed, as it were, buffeted about that night on a dark sea of trouble; while the beloved being beside him lay sleeping peacefully, all unconscious of the rising storm. Many times, during that dismal night, would he have risen from his bed to seek a momentary relief, by walking to and fro, but that he feared disturbing her, and disclosing the extent and

depth of his distress. It was nearly five o'clock in the morning before he at length sunk into sleep; and of one thing I can assure the reader, that however that excellent man might have shrunk—and shrink he did—from the sufferings that seemed in store for him, and those who were far dearer to him than life itself, he did not give way to one repining or rebellious thought. On the contrary, his real frame of mind, on that trying occasion, may be discovered in one short prayer, which he more than once was on the point of expressing aloud in words—"Oh my God! in my prosperity I have ever acknowledged thee; forsake me not in my adversity!"

At an early hour in the morning his carriage drew up at Mr. Parkinson's door; and he brought with him, as he had promised, a great number of title-deeds and family documents. On these, as well as on many others which were in Mr. Parkinson's custody, that gentleman and Mr. Runnington were anxiously engaged during almost every minute of that day and the ensuing one; at the close of which, they had, between them, drawn up the rough draft of a case, with which Mr. Runnington set off for town by the mail; undertaking to lay it, within twenty-four hours, before the attorney-general, and also before one of the greatest conveyancers of the day; commended to their best and earliest attention, by very liberal fees and extra gratuities to their clerks. He pledged himself to transmit their opinions, by the very first mail, to Mr. Parkinson; and both those gentlemen immediately set about active preparations for defending the ejectment. The "eminent conveyancer" fixed upon by Messrs. Runnington and Parkinson, was Mr. Tresayle, whose clerk, however, on looking into the papers, presently carried them back to Messrs. Runnington, with the information that Mr. Tresayle had, a few months ago, "advised on the other side." The next person whom Mr. Runnington thought of, was—singularly enough—Mr. Mortmain, who was occasionally employed, in heavy matters, by the firm. His clerk, also, on the ensuing morning returned the papers, assigning the same reason as had been given by Mr. Tresayle's clerk. All this formed a startling corroboration, truly, of Messrs. Quirk and Gammon's assurance to Mr. Runnington, that they had "had the first conveyancing opinions in the kingdom;" and evidenced the formidable scale on which their operations were being conducted. There were, however, other "eminent conveyancers" besides the two above mentioned; and in the hands of Mr. Mansfield, who, with a less extended reputation, but an equal practice, was a far abler man, and a much higher style of conveyancer than Mr. Mortmain, Mr. Runnington left his client's interests with the utmost confidence. Not satisfied with this, he laid the case also before Mr. Crystal, the junior, whom he had already retained in the cause—a man whose lucid understanding was not ill indicated by his name. Though his manner in court was feeble and unimpressive, and his appearance even childish; his temper irritable, and his demeanour ridiculously supercilious; he was an invaluable acquisition in an important cause. He knew, probably, little else than law; but to that he had for some twenty years applied himself with unwearied energy; and he consequently became a ready, accurate, and thorough lawyer, equal to all the practical exigencies of his profession. He brought his knowledge to bear on every point presented to him with beautiful precision. He was equally quick and cautious—artful to a degree—But I shall have other opportunities of describing him; since on him, as on every working junior, will devolve the real conduct of

the defendant's case in the memorable action of *Doe on the demise of Titmouse v. Roe*.

As Mr. Aubrey was driving home from the visit to Mr. Parkinson which I have above mentioned, he stopped his carriage on entering the village, because he saw Dr. Tatham coming out of Williams's cottage, where he had been paying a visit to poor Phoebe.

The little doctor was plunthering on, ankle-deep in snow, towards the vicarage, when Mr. Aubrey (who had sent home his carriage with word that he should presently follow) came up with him, and greeting him with usual fervour, said that he would accompany him to the vicarage.

"You are in very great trouble, my dear friend," said the doctor, seriously—"I saw it plainly last night; but of course I said nothing. Come in to my little house here—let us talk freely with one another; for, as iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend. Is it not so?"

"It is indeed, my dear doctor," replied Mr. Aubrey, suddenly softened by the affectionate simplicity of the doctor's manner. How much the good doctor was shocked by the communication which which Mr. Aubrey presently made to him, the reader may easily imagine. He even shed tears, on beholding the forced calmness with which Mr. Aubrey depicted the gloomy prospect that was before him. "Twas not in vain that the pious pastor led the subdued and willing mind of his beloved companion to those sources of consolation and support which a true Christian cannot approach in vain. Upon his bruised and bleeding feelings were poured the balm of true religious consolation; and Mr. Aubrey quitted his revered companion with a far firmer tone of mind than that with which he had entered the vicarage. But when he passed through the park gates, the sudden reflection that he was probably no longer the proprietor of the dear old familiar objects that meet his eye at every step, almost overpowered him.

On entering the hall, he was informed that one of the tenants, Peter Johnson, had been sitting in the servant's hall for nearly two hours, waiting to see him. Mr. Aubrey repaired at once to the library, and desired the man to be at once shown in. Johnson had been for some twenty-five years a tenant of a considerable farm on the estate, had scarcely ever been a few weeks behind-hand with his rent, and had always been considered one of the most exemplary persons in the whole neighbourhood. He had now, poor fellow, got into trouble indeed, for he had, a year or two before, been persuaded to become security for his brother-in-law as a tax-collector; and had, alas! the day before, been called upon to pay the three hundred pounds in which he stood bound—his worthless brother-in-law having absconded with nearly £1000 of the public money. Poor Johnson, who had a large family to support, was in deep tribulation, bowed down with grief and shame: and after a sleepless night had at length ventured down to Yatton, and with a desperate boldness asked the benevolent squire to advance him £200 towards the money, to save himself from being cast into prison. Mr. Aubrey heard his sad story to the end without one single interruption; though, to a more practised observer than the troubled old farmer, the workings of his countenance, from time to time, must have told his inward agitation. "I lend this poor soul £200!" thought he, "who am penniless myself? Shall I not be really acting as his dishonest relative has been acting, and making free with money that belongs to another?"

"I assure you, my worthy friend," said he at length,

with a little agitation of manner, "that I have just now a very serious call upon me—or you know how gladly I would have complied with your request."

"Oh, sir, have mercy on me! I've an ailing wife and seven children to support," said poor Johnson, wringing his hands.

"Can't I do any thing with the government?"—

"No, sir; I'm told they're so mighty angry with my rascally brother, they'll listen to nobody! It's a hard matter for me to keep straight at home without this, sir. I've so many mouths to fill—and if they take me off to prison, Lord! Lord! what's to become of us all?"

Mr. Aubrey's lip quivered. Johnson fell on his knees, and the tears ran down his cheeks. "I've never asked a living man for money before, sir—and, if you'll only lend it me, God Almighty will bless you and yours—you'll save us all from ruin—I'll work day and night to pay it back again!"

"Rise—rise, Johnson," said Mr. Aubrey, with emotion. "You shall have the money, my friend, if you will call to-morrow," he added, with a deep sigh, after a moment's hesitation.

He was as good as his word.

Had Mr. Aubrey been naturally of a cheerful and vivacious turn, the contrast now afforded by his gloomy manner must have alarmed his family. As it was, however, it was not so strong and marked as to be attended with that effect, especially as he exerted himself to the utmost to conceal, or at least to control his distress. That something had gone wrong, he freely acknowledged; and, as he spoke of it always in connection with political topics, he succeeded in parrying their questions, and checking suspicion. But, whenever they were all collected together, could he not justly compare them to a happy group, unconscious that they stood on a mine which was about to be fired?

About a week afterwards, namely, on the 12th of January, arrived little Charles's birth-day, when he became five years old; and Kate had for some days been moving heaven and earth to get up a children's party in honour of the occasion. After considerable riding and driving about, she succeeded in persuading the parents of some eight or ten children—two little daughters, for instance, of the Earl of Oldacre, (beautiful creatures they were, to be sure)—little Master and the two Miss Bertons, the children of one of the county members—Sir Harry Oldfield, an orphan of about five years of age, the infant possessor of a magnificent estate—and two or three other little girls—to send them all to Yatton for a day and a night, with their governesses and attendants.

'Twas a charming little affair. It went off brilliantly, as the phrase is, and repaid all Kate's exertions. She, her mother, and brother, and sister, all dined at the same table with the merry little guests, who (with a laughable crowd of attendants behind them, to be sure) behaved remarkably well on the occasion. Sir Harry (a little thing about Charles's age, the black riband round his waist, and also the half-mourning dress worn by his maid, who stood behind him, showed how recent was the event which had made him an orphan) proposed little Aubrey's health, in (I must own) a somewhat stiff speech, demurely dictated to him by Kate, (who sat between him and her beautiful little nephew.) She then performed the same office for Charles, who stood on a chair while delivering his eloquent acknowledgment of the toast.

(Oh, that anguished brow of thine, Aubrey, (thank God it is unobserved!) but it tells me that the iron is entering thy soul.)

And the moment that he had done—Kate folding her arms around him and kissing him—down they all jumped, and a merry throng, scampered off to the drawing-room, (followed by Kate,) where blindman's buff, husbands and wives, and divers other little games, kept them in constant enjoyment. After tea they were to have dancing—Kate mistress of the ceremonies—and 'twas quite laughable to see how perpetually she was foiled in her efforts to form the little sets. The girls were orderly enough—but their wild little partners were quite uncontrollable. The instant they were placed, and Kate had gone to the instrument and struck off a note or two—heigh!—there was a scrambling little crowd, jumping, and laughing, and chattering, and signing! Over and over again she formed them into sets, with the like results. But at length a young lady, one of their governesses, took Miss Aubrey's place at the piano, leaving the latter to superintend the performances in person. She at length succeeded in getting up something like a country-dance, led off by Charles and little Lady Anne Cherville, the eldest daughter of the Earl of Oldacre, a beautiful child of about five years old, and who, judging from appearances, bade fair, in due time, to become another Lady Caroline Caversham. You would have laughed outright to watch the coquettish airs which this little creature gave herself with Charles, whom yet she evidently could not bear to see dancing with another.

"Now I shall dance with somebody else!" he exclaimed, suddenly letting go Lady Anne, and snatching hold of a sweet little thing, Miss Berton, that was standing modestly beside him. The discarded beauty walked with a stately air, and a swelling heart, towards Mrs. Aubrey, who sat beside her husband on the sofa; and on reaching her, she stood for a few moments silently watching her late partner busily engaged with her successor—and then she burst into tears.

"Charles!" called out Mrs. Aubrey, who had watched the whole affair, and could hardly keep her countenance—"come here directly, Charles."

"Yes, mamma!" he exclaimed—quite unaware of the serious aspect which things were assuming—and, without quitting the dance, where he was (as his jealous mistress too plainly saw, for, despite her grief, her eye seemed to follow all his motions) skipping about with infinite glee with a *third* partner—a laughing sister of his last partner.

"Come here, Charles," said Mr. Aubrey; and in an instant his little son, all flushed and breathless, was at his side.

"Well, dear papa!" said he, keeping his eye fixed on the little throng he had just quitted, and where his deserted partner was skipping about alone.

"What have you been doing to Lady Anne, Charles?" said his father.

"Nothing, dear papa!" he replied, still wistfully eyeing the dancers.

"You know you left me, and went to dance with Miss Berton; you did, Charles!" said the offended beauty.

"That is not behaving like a little gentleman, Charles," said his father. The tears came into the child's eyes.

"I'm very sorry, dear papa, I will dance with her!"

"No, not now," said Lady Anne, haughtily.

"Oh, pooh! pooh!—kiss and be friends," said Mrs. Aubrey, "and go and dance as prettily as you were doing before." Little Aubrey put his arms round Lady Anne, kissed her, and away they both started to the dance again. While the latter part of this scene was going on, Mr. Aubrey's eye caught the figure of a servant who

made his appearance at the door, and then retired, (for such had been Mr. Aubrey's orders in the event of any messenger coming from Grilston.) Hastily whispering that he should return soon, he left the room. In the hall stood a messenger from Mr. Parkinson; and, on seeing Mr. Aubrey, he took out a packet and retired, Mr. Aubrey, with evident trepidation, repairing to his library. With a trembling hand he broke the seal, and found the following letter from Mr. Parkinson, with three other enclosures:—

"Grilston, 12th Jan. 18—.

"My dear Sir,

"I have only just received, and at once forward to you, copies of the three opinions given by the attorney-general, Mr. Mansfield, and Mr. Crystal. I lament to find that they are of a most discouraging character. They are quite independent of each other, having been laid before their respective writers at the same moment; yet you will observe that all three of them have hit upon precisely the same points, *viz.* that your grandfather had no right to succeed to the inheritance till there was a failure of the heirs of Dame Dorothy Duddington. If, therefore, our opponents have contrived to ferret out any one who satisfies that designation, (I cannot conjecture how they ever got upon the scent,) I really fear we must prepare for the worst. I have been quietly pushing my inquiries in all directions, with a view to obtaining a clue to the case intended to be set up against us, and which you will find very shrewdly guessed at by the attorney-general. *Nor am I the only party* in the field who has been making pointed inquiries in your neighbourhood; but of this more when we meet to-morrow.

"I remain

"Yours very respectfully,

"J. PARKINSON.

"Charles Aubrey, Esq., M. P."

Having read this letter, Mr. Aubrey sunk back in his chair, and remained motionless for more than a quarter of an hour. At length he roused himself and read over the opinions; the effect of which he found had been but too correctly given by Mr. Parkinson. Some suggestions and inquiries put by the acute and experienced Mr. Crystal, suddenly revived recollections of one or two incidents even of his boyish days, long forgotten, but which, as he reflected upon them, began to re-appear to his mind's eye with sickening distinctness. Wave after wave of agony passed over him, chilling and benumbing his heart within him; so that, when his little son came some time afterwards running up to him, with a message from his mamma, that she hoped he could come back to see them all play at snapdragon before they went to bed, he answered him mechanically, hardly seeming sensible even of his presence. At length, with a groan that came from the depths of his heart, he rose, and walked to and fro, sensible of the necessity of exerting himself, and preparing himself, in some degree, for encountering his mother, his wife, and his sister. Taking up his candle, he hastened to his dressing-room, where he hoped, by the aid of refreshing ablutions, to succeed in effacing at least the stronger of these traces of suffering which his glass displayed to him, as it reflected the image of his blanched and agitated countenance. A sudden recollection of the critical and delicate situation of his idolised wife glanced through his heart like a keen arrow. He sunk upon the sofa, and, clasping his hands, looked the most forlorn object that could be imagined. While he

was in this deplorable state of mind, the door was pushed hastily but gently open; and, first looking in to see that it was really he of whom she was in search, in rushed Mrs. Aubrey, pale and agitated, having been alarmed by his non-appearance in the drawing-room, and the look of the servant from whom she had learned that his master had been for some time gone up stairs.

"Charles! my love! my sweet love!" she exclaimed wildly, rushing up to him, flinging herself down beside him, and casting her arms round his neck. Overcome by the suddenness of her appearance and movements, for a moment he spoke not, but stared at her as if stupefied.

"For mercy's sake—as you love me!—tell me, my darling, darling Charles, what has happened!"

"Nothing—love—nothing;" but his look belied his speech.

"Oh! am not I the wife of your bosom, dearest? Charles, I shall go distracted if you do not tell me what has happened. I know that something—something dreadful!" He put his arm round her waist, and drew her tenderly towards him. He felt her heart beating violently. He kissed her cold forehead, but spoke not.

"Come, dearest! let me share your sorrows," said she, in a thrilling voice. "Cannot you trust your Agnes? Has not Heaven sent me as a helpmeet for you?"

"I love you, Agnes! ay, more than ever man loved woman!" he murmured, and buried his face in her bosom. Her arms folded him in closer and closer embrace; and she looked with wild agitation, expecting presently to hear of some fearful catastrophe. "I cannot bear this much longer, dearest—I feel I cannot," said she, rather faintly. "What has happened? What that you dare not tell me? I can bare any thing, while I have you and my children! You have been unhappy, my own Charles, for many days past. I will not part with you now till I know all!"

"You soon must know all, my precious Agnes; and I take Heaven to witness, that it is only on your account. I did not wish you to have known it till!"

"You—are never going—to fight a duel?" she gasped, turning as white as death.

"Oh! no, no, Agnes! I solemnly assure you! If I could have brought myself to engage in such an unhallowed affair, would this scene ever first have occurred! No, no, my own love! Must I then tell you of the misfortune that has overtaken us?" She gazed at him in mute and breathless apprehension. "They are bringing an action against me, which, if successful, may cause us all to quit Yatton—and, it may be, for ever."

"Oh, Charles!" she murmured, her eyes riveted upon his, while she unconsciously moved nearer to him, and trembled. Her head drooped upon his shoulder.

"Why is this?" she whispered.

"Let us, dearest, talk of it another time. I have now told you what you asked me." He poured her out a glass of water. Having drunk a little, she appeared revived.

"Is all lost? Do, my own Charles, let me know the worst."

"We are young, Agnes, and have the world before us. Health and honour are better than riches. You and our little loves—the children which God has given us—are my riches," said he, gazing with unspeakable fondness at her. "Even should it be the will of Heaven that this affair should go against us—so long as they cannot separate us from each other, they cannot really hurt us." She suddenly kissed him with frantic energy, and

an hysterical smile gleamed over her pallid excited features.

"Calm yourself, Agnes!—calm yourself, for my sake! as you love me!" His voice quivered. "Oh, how very weak and foolish I have been to yield to!"

"No, no, no!" she gasped, evidently labouring with hysterical oppression. "Hush!" said she, suddenly starting, and wildly leaning forward towards the door which opened into the gallery leading to the various bedrooms. He listened—the mother's ear had been quick and true. He presently heard the sound of many children's voices approaching: they were the little party, accompanied by Kate, on their way to bed: and little Charles's voice was loudest, and his laugh the merriest of them all. The wild smile of hysterics gleamed on Mrs. Aubrey's face: her hand grasped her husband's with convulsive pressure; and she suddenly sunk, rigid and senseless, upon the sofa. He seemed for a moment stunned at the sight of her motionless figure. Soon, however, recovering his presence of mind, he rang the bell, and one or two female attendants quickly appeared; and by their joint assistance Mrs. Aubrey was carried to her bed in the adjoining room, where, by the use of the ordinary remedies, she was presently restored to consciousness. Her first languid look was towards Mr. Aubrey, whose hand she slowly raised to her lips. She tried to raise a smile into her wan features—but 'twas in vain; and, after a few heavy and half-choking sobs, her overcharged feelings found relief in a flood of tears. Full of the liveliest apprehensions as to the effect of this violent emotion upon her, in her delicate condition, he remained with her for some time, pouring into her ear every soothing and tender expression he could think of. He at length succeeded in bringing her into a somewhat more tranquil state than he could have expected. He strictly enjoined the attendants, who had not quitted their lady's chamber, and whose alarmed and inquisitive looks he had noticed for some time with anxiety, to preserve silence concerning what they had so unexpectedly witnessed, adding that something unfortunate had happened, of which they would hear but too soon.

"Are you going to tell Kate?" whispered Mrs. Aubrey, sorrowfully. "Surely, love, you have suffered enough through my weakness. Wait till to-morrow. Let her have a few more happy hours."

"No, Agnes—it was my own weakness which caused me to be surprised into this premature disclosure to you. And now I must meet her again to-night, and I cannot control either my features or my feelings. Yes, poor Kate, she must know all to-night! I shall not be long absent, Agnes." And directing her maid to remain with her till he returned, he withdrew, and with slow step and heavy heart descended to the library: preparing himself for another heart-breaking scene—plunging another innocent and joyous creature into misery, which he believed to be inevitable. Having looked into the drawing-room as he passed it, and seen no one there—his mother having, as usual, retired at a very early hour—he rung his library bell, and desired Miss Aubrey's maid to request her mistress to come down to him there, as soon as she was at leisure. He was glad that the only light in the room was that given out by the fire, which was not very bright, and so would in some degree shield his features from, at all events, immediate scrutiny. His heart ached as, shortly afterwards, he heard Kate's light step crossing the hall. When she entered, her eyes sparkled with vivacity, and a smile was on her beautiful cheek. Her dress was tumbled, and her hair hung disordered and



half uncurled—the results of her sport with the little ones whom she had been seeing to bed.

"What merry little things, to be sure!" she commenced, laughingly—"I could not get them to lie still a moment—popping their little heads in and out of the clothes. A fine night I shall have with Sir Harry! for he is to be my bedfellow, and I dare say I shall not sleep a wink all night. Why, Charles, how very—very grave you look to-night!" she added quickly, observing his eye fixed moodily upon her.

"Tis you who are so very gay," he replied, endeavouring to smile. "I want to speak to you, dear Kate," he commenced affectionately, "on a serious matter. I have received some letters to-night!"

Kate coloured suddenly and violently, and her heart beat; but, sweet soul! she was mistaken—very, very far off the mark her troubled brother was aiming at. "And relying on your strength of mind, I have resolved to put you at once in possession of what I myself know. Can you bear bad news well, Kate?"

She turned very pale, and drawing her chair nearer to her brother, said, "Do not keep me in suspense, Charles—I can bear any thing but suspense—that is dreadful! What has happened? Oh, dear," she added, with sudden alarm, "where are mamma and Agnes?" She started to her feet.

"I assure you they are both well, Kate. My mother is now doubtless asleep, and as well as she ever was; Agnes is in her bedroom—certainly much distressed at the news which I am going!"

"Oh, why, Charles, did you tell *any thing* distressing to her?" exclaimed Miss Aubrey, with an alarmed air.

"She came upon me by surprise, Kate. 'Twould have been infinitely more dangerous to have kept her in suspense; but she is recovering. I shall soon return to her. And now, my dear Kate—I know your strong sense and spirit—a very great calamity hangs over us. Let you and me," he grasped her hands affectionately, "stand it steadily, and support those who cannot."

"Let me at once know all, Charles. See if I do not bear it as becomes your sister," said she, with forced calmness.

"If it should become necessary for all of us to retire into obscurity—humble obscurity, dear Kate—how do you think you could bear it?"

"If it will be an honourable obscurity—nay, 'tis quite impossible to be *dis-honourable* obscurity," said Miss Aubrey, with a momentary flash of energy.

"Never, never, Kate! The Aubreys may lose every thing on earth but the jewel *honour*, and love for one another."

"Let me know all, Charles," said Miss Aubrey, in a low tone, but with a look of the deepest apprehension.

"A strange claim is set up—by one I never heard of—to the whole of the property I now enjoy."

Miss Aubrey started, and the colour left her cheek.

"But is it a *true* claim, Charles?"

"That remains to be proved. But I will disguise nothing from you—I have woful apprehensions!"

"Do you mean to say that Yatton is *not ours*?" inquired Miss Aubrey, catching her breath.

"So, my dearest girl, it is said."

Miss Aubrey looked bewildered, and pressed her hand to her forehead.

"How shocking!—shocking!—shocking!" she gasped. "What is to become of mamma?"

"God Almighty will not desert her in her old age.

He will desert none of us, dearest, if we only trust in Him," said her brother.

Miss Aubrey remained gazing at him intently, and continued perfectly motionless.

"Must we all leave Yatton?" said she, faintly.

"If this claim succeeds—but we shall leave it *together*, Kate."

She threw her arms round his neck, and wept bitterly.

"Hush, hush, Kate!" said he, perceiving the increasing violence of her emotions, "restrain your feelings for the sake of my mother—and Agnes."

His words had the desired effect: the poor girl made a desperate effort. Unclasping her arms from her brother's neck, she sat down in her chair, breathing hard; and, after a few minutes' pause, she said, faintly, "I am better now. Do tell me more, Charles! Let me have something to *think* about—only don't say any thing about—about—mamma and Agnes!" In spite of herself a visible shudder ran through her frame.

"It seems, Kate," said he, with all the calmness he could assume—"at least they are trying to prove—that our family had no right to succeed to this property; that there is living the right heir; his case has been taken up by powerful friends; and—let me tell you the worst at once—the first lawyers in the kingdom seem to agree that he is entitled to recover the whole of Yatton—even the lawyers consulted by Mr. Parkinson on my behalf!"

"But is mamma provided for?" whispered Miss Aubrey, almost inarticulately. "When I look at her again, I shall almost break my heart."

"No, Kate, you won't. Heaven will give you strength," said her brother, in a tremulous voice. "Remember, my only sister—my darling Kate! you must support *me* in my trouble—we will support one another!"

"We will!—we will!" interrupted Miss Aubrey—instantly checking, however, her rising excitement.

"You bear it bravely, my noble girl!" said Mr. Aubrey, fondly, after a brief interval of silence.

She turned from him her head, and moved her hand—in deprecation of expressions that might utterly unnerve her. Then she convulsively clasped her hands over her forehead; and after a minute or two, turned towards him with tears in her eyes, but tranquillised features. The struggle had been dreadful, though brief—her noble spirit recovered itself.

'Twas like a fair bark, in mortal conflict with the black and boiling waters and howling hurricane; long quivering on the brink of destruction, but at last outliving the storm, righting itself, and suddenly gliding into safe and tranquil waters.

The distressed brother and sister sat conversing for a long time, frequently in tears, but with infinitely greater calmness and firmness than could have been expected. They agreed that Dr. Tatham should very early in the morning be sent for, and implored to take upon himself the bitter duty of breaking the matter to their mother; its effects upon whom, her children anticipated with the most vivid apprehension. They then retired—Kate to a sleepless pillow, and her brother to spend a greater portion of the night in attempts to soothe and console his suffering wife; each of them having first knelt in humble reverence, and poured forth the breathings of a stricken and bleeding heart before Him who hath declared that he *HEARETH* and *ANSWERETH* prayer.

Ah! who can tell what a day or an hour may bring forth?

"It won't kindle—not a bit on't—it's green and full o' sap. Go out, and get us a log that's dry and old, George—and let's try to have a bit of a blaze in t' ould chimney, this bitter night," said Isaac Tanson, the game-keeper at Yatton, to the good-natured landlord of the Aubrey Arms, the little—and only—in of the village. The suggestion was instantly attended to.

"How Peter's a feathering of his geese to-night, to be sure!" exclaimed the landlord on his return, shaking the snow off his coat, and laying on the fire a great dry old log of wood, which seemed very acceptable to the hungry flames, for they licked it cordially the moment it was placed amongst them, and there was very soon given out a cheerful blaze. 'Twas a snug room, the brick floor covered with fresh sand; and on a few stools and benches, with a table in the middle, on which stood a large can and ale-glasses, with a plate of tobacco, sat some half a dozen men, enjoying their pipe and glass. In the chimney-corner sat Thomas Dickons, the under-bailiff of Mr. Aubrey, a big, broad-shouldered, middle-aged fellow, with a hard featured face and a phlegmatic air. In the opposite corner sat the little grizzle-headed clerk and sexton, old Halleluiah—as he was called, but his real name was Jonas Higgs). Beside him sat Pumpkin, the gardener at the hall, a constant guest at the Aubrey Arms o' nights—always attended by Hector, the large Newfoundland dog already spoken of, and who was now lying stretched on the floor at Pumpkin's feet, his nose resting on his fore-feet, and his eyes, with great gravity, watching the motions of a skittish kitten under the table. Opposite to him sat Tanson the game-keeper—a thin, wiry, beetle-browed fellow, with eyes like a ferret; and there were also one or two farmers, that lived in the village.

"Let's ha' another can o' ale, afore ye sit down," said one of them; "we can do with half a gallon, I'm thinking." This order also was quickly attended to; and then the landlord, having seen to the door, and fastened the shutters close, took his place on a vacant stool, and resumed his pipe.

"So she do take a very long grave, Jonas?" inquired Dickons of the sexton.

"Ay, Mr. Dickins, a' think she do, the owld girl! I always thought she would. 'Tis a reg'lar man's size, I warrant you; and when parson saw it a' said, he thought 'twere too big; but I ax'd his pardon, and said I hadn't been sexton for thirty years without knowing my business—ha, ha!"

"I suppose, Jonas, you mun ha' seen her walking about i' t' village, in your time—*Were* she such a big looking woman?" inquired Pumpkin, as he shook the ashes out of his pipe, and replenished it.

"Forty years ago I used to see her—she were then an old woman, wi' white hair, and leaned on a stick—I never thought she'd lasted so long," replied Higgs, emptying his glass.

"She've had a pretty long spell on't," quoth Dickons, slowly emptying his mouth of smoke.

"A hundred and two," replied the sexton; "so saith her coffin-plate—a seed it to-day."

"What wote her name?" inquired Tanson—"I never knew her by any name but Blind Bess."

"Her name be *Elizabeth Crabtree*, on the coffin," replied Higgs; "and she's to be buried to-morrow."

"She were a strange old woman," said Hazel, one of the farmers, as he took down one of the outcakes that were hanging overhead, and breaking off a piece, held

it with the tongs before the fire to toast, and then put it into his ale.

"Ay, she were," quoth Pumpkin; "I wonder what she thinks o' such things now—maybe she's paying dear for her tricks."

"Tut, Pumpkin," said Tanson, "let the old creature rest in her grave."

"Ay, Master Tanson," quoth the clerk, in his church twang—"there be no knowledge, nor wisdom, nor device!"

"'Tis very odd, but this dog that's lying at my feet never could a' bear going past her cottage late o' nights; and the night she died—Lord! you should have heard the howl Hector gave—and a' didn't then know she were gone."

"No! but wer't really so?" inquired Dickons—several of the others taking their pipes out of their mouths, and looking earnestly at Pumpkin.

"Ha, ha, ha!—ha, ha!" laughed the game-keeper—

"Ay, marry you may laugh—but I'll stake half a gallon o' ale you daren't go by yourself to the cottage where she's lying—*now*, mind—i' the dark."

"I'll do it," quoth Higgs, eagerly, preparing to lay down his pipe.

"No, no—*thou'rt* quite used to dead folk," replied Pumpkin.

"Bess dropped off sudden, like, at last, didn't she?" inquired the landlord.

"She went out, as they say, like the snuff of a candle," replied Jobbins, one of the farmers; "no one were with her but missis at the time. The night afore she took to the rattles all of a sudden. My Sall (that's done for her this long time, by madam's orders) says old Bess were a good deal shaken by a chap from London, that came down about a week afore Christmas."

"Ay, ay," quoth one, "I've heard o' that—what was it!—what passed atwixt them?"

"Why, a' don't well know—but he had a book, and wrote down something; and he axed her, so Sall do tell me, such a many things about old people, and things that are long gone by."

"What were the use on't?" inquired Dickons; "for Bess has been silly this ten years, to my sartin knowledge."

"Why, a' couldn't tell. Sall said she talked a good deal to the chap in her mumbling way, and seemed to know some folk he asked her about. And Sall saith she hath been, in a manner, dismal ever since, and often a-crying and talking to herself."

"I've heard," said the landlord, "that squire and parson were wi' her on Christmas-day—and that she talked a deal o' strange things, and that the squire did seem, as it were, *struck* a little."

"Why, so my Sall do say; but it may be all her own head," replied Jobbins.

Here a pause took place.

"Madam," said the sexton, "hath given orders for a decent burying to-morrow."

"Well, a' never thought any wrong of her, for my part," said one—and another—and another; and they smoked their pipes for some minutes in silence.

"Talking o' strangers from London," said the sexton, presently; "who do know any thing o' them two chaps that were at church last Sunday? Two such peacock-looking chaps I never seed—and grinning all service time."

"Ay, I'll tell ye something of 'em," said Hazel—a big, broad-shouldered farmer, who plucked his pipe out of his

mouth with sudden energy—"They're a brace o' good ones, to be sure, ha, ha! Some week or ten days ago, as I were a'coming across the field leading into the lane behind the church, I seed these same two chaps, and on coming nearer, (they not seeing me for the hedge,) Lord bless me! would ye believe it?—if they wasn't a-teasing my daughter Jenny, that were coming along wi' some physick from the doctor for my old woman! One of 'em seemed a-going to put his arm around her neck, and t'other came close to her on t'other side, a-talking to her and pushing her about." Here a young farmer, who had but seldom spoken, took his pipe out of his mouth, and exclaiming, "Lord bless me!" sat listening with his mouth wide open. "Well, a' came into the road behind 'em, without their seeing me; and"—(here he stretched out a thick, rigid, muscular arm, and clenched his teeth)—"a' got hold of each by the collar, and one of 'em I shook about, and gave him a kick i' the breech that sent him spinning a yard or two on the road, he clapping his hand behind him, and crying, to be sure—"Good for a hundred pounds damages!" T'other dropped on his knees, and begged for mercy; so a' just spit in his face, and flung him under the hedge, telling him if he stirred till I were out o' sight, I'd crack his skull for him; and so I would!" Here the wrathful speaker pushed his pipe again between his lips, and began puffing away with great energy; while hew ho had appeared to take so great an interest in the story, and who was the very man who had flown to the rescue of Miss Aubrey, when she seemed on the point of being similarly treated, told that circumstance exactly as it occurred, amidst the silent but excited wonder of those present—all of whom, at its close, uttered vehement execrations, and intimated the summary and savage punishment which the cowardly rascal would have experienced at the hands of each and every one of them, had they come across him.

"I reckon," said the landlord, as soon as the swell had a little subsided, "they must be the two chaps that put up here, some time ago, for an hour or so. You should ha' seen 'em get on and off—that's all! Why, a' laughed outright! The chap with the hair under his chin got on upon the wrong side, and t'other seemed as if he thought his beast would bite him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed all.

"I thought they'd a both got a fall before they'd gone a dozen yards!"

"They've taken a strange fancy to my church-yard," said the sexton, setting down his glass, and then preparing to fill his pipe again; "they've been looking uncommon close in the old grave-stones, up behind t'ould yew-tree yonder; and one of them writ something, now and then, in a book; so they're book writers."

"That's scholars, I reckon," quoth Dickons, "but rot the larning of such chaps as they!"

"I wonder if they'll put a picture o' the Hall in their book," quoth the sexton. "They axed a many questions about the people up there, especially about the squire's father, and some ould folk, whose names I knew when they spoke of 'em—but I hadn't heard o' them for this forty years. And one of 'em (he were the shortest, and such a chap, to be sure!—just like the monkey that were dressed i' man's clothes last Grilston fair) talked uncommon fine about Miss!"

"If I a' heard him tak' her name into his dirty mouth, his teeth should a' gone after it!" said Tonson.

"Lord, he didn't say any harm—only silly-like—and t'other seemed now and then not to like his going on so. The little one said miss were a lovely gal, or something

like that—and hoped they'd become by-and-by better friends."

"What! wi' that chap?" said Pumpkin—and he looked as if he were meditating putting the little sexton up the chimney, for the mere naming of such a thing.

"I reckon they're from London, and brought London tricks wi' 'em—for I never heard o' such goings on as theirs down here before," said Tonson.

"One of 'em—him that axed me all the questions, and wrote i' th' book, seemed a sharp enough chap, in his way; but I can't say much for the little one," said Higgs. "Lud, I couldn't hardly look in his face for laughing, he seemed such a fool!—He had a riding-whip wi' a silver head, and stood smacking his legs (you should ha' seen how tight his clothes was on his legs—I warrant you, Tim Timkins never seed such a thing, I'll be sworn) all the while, as if a' liked to hear the sound of it."

"If I'd a been beside him," said Hazel, "I'd a saved him that trouble—only I'd a hid it into another part of him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" they laughed—and presently passed on to other matters.

"Hath the squire been doing much lately in parliament?" inquired the sexton of Dickons.

"Why, yee—he's trying hard to get that new road made from Harkley Bridge to Hilton."

"Ah, that would save a good four mile!"

"I hear the papists are trying to get the upper hand again—which the Lud forbid!" said the sexton.

"The squire hath lately made a speech in that matter, that hath finished them," said Dickons.

"What would they be after?" inquired the landlord of Dickons, with all present, thinking great things of him.

"They say they wants nothing but wha's their own, and liberty, and that like."

"If thou wast a shepherd, and wer't to be asked by ten or a dozen wolves to let them in among thy flock of sheep, they saying how quiet and kind they would be to 'em—would'st let 'em in, or keep 'em out—eh?"

"Ay, ay—that be it—'tis as true as gospel!" said the clerk.

"So you an't to have that old sycamore down, after all, Master Dickons?" inquired Tonson.

"No; miss hath carried the day against the squire and Mr. Waters; and there stands the old tree, and it hath to be looked better after than it were before."

"Why hath miss taken such a fancy to it? 'Tis an old crazy thing."

"If thou hadst been there when she did beg, as I may say, its life," replied Dickons, with a little energy—"and hadst seen her, and heard her voice, that be as smooth as cream, thou would'st never have forgotten it, I can tell thee!"

"There isn't a more beautiful lady i' th' county, I reckon, than the squire's sister?" inquired the sexton.

"No, nor in all England: if there be, I'll lay down a hundred pounds."

"And where's to be found a young lady that do go about i' th' village like she?—She were wi' Phoebe Williams t'other night, all through the snow, and i' th' dark."

"If I'd only laid hands on that chap!" interrupted the young farmer, her rescuer.

"I wonder she do not choose some one to be married to up in London," said the landlord.

"She'll be having some delicate high quality chap, I reckon, one o' these fine days," said Hazel.

"She will be a dainty dish, truly, for whomever God gives her to," quoth Dickons.

"Ay, she will," said more than one; and there was a slight sound as of smacking of lips.

"Now, to my mind," said Tonson, "saving your presence, Master Dickons, I know not but young madam be more to my taste; she be in a manner somewhat fuller—plumper-like, and her skin be so white, and her hair as black as a raven's."

"There's not another two such women to be found in the world," said Dickons. Here Hector suddenly rose up, and went to the door, where he stood snuffing in an inquisitive manner.

"Now, what do that dog hear, I wonder!" quoth Pumpkin, curiously, stooping forward.

"Blind Bess," replied Tonson, winking his eye, and laughing. Presently there was a sharp rapping at the door; which the landlord opened, and let in one of the servants from the Hall, his clothes white with snow, his face nearly as white with manifest agitation.

"Why, man, what's the matter?" inquired Dickons, startled by the man's appearance. "Art frightened at any thing?"

"Oh, Lord! oh, Lord!" he commenced.

"What is it, man? Art drunk?—or mad?—or frightened? Take a drop o' drink," said Tonson. But the man refused it.

"Oh, my friends, and work at the Hall!"

"What's the matter?" cried all at once, rising and standing round the new comer.

"If thou be'st drunk, John," said Dickons, sternly, "there's a way of sobering thee—mind that."

"Oh, Master Dickons, I don't know what's come to me, for grief and fright! The squire, and all of us, are to be turned out of Yatton!"

"What?" exclaimed all in a breath.

"There's some one else lays claim to it. We must all go! Oh, Lud! oh, Lud!" No one spoke for near a minute; and consternation was written on every face.

"Sit thee down here, John," said Dickons at length, "and let us hear what thou hast to say—or thou wilt have us all be going up in a body to the Hall."

Having forced on him part of a glass of ale, he began,—"There hath been plainly mischief brewing somewhere this many days, as I could tell by the troubled face o' the squire; but he kept it to himself. Lawyer Parkinson and another have been latterly coming in chaises from London; and last night the squire got a letter that hath finished all. Such trouble there were last night with the squire, and young madam and miss! And to-day the parson came, and were a long while alone with old Madam Aubrey, who hath since had a stroke, or a fit, or something of that like, (the doctor hath been there all day from Grilston,) and likewise young madam hath taken to her bed, and is ill."

"And what of the squire and miss?" inquired some one, after all had maintained a long silence.

"Oh, 'twould break your heart to see them," said the man, bursting into tears: "they are both as pale as death; he so dreadful sorrowful, but quiet-like, and she now and then wringing her hands, and both of them going from the bed-room of old madam to young madam's. Nay, an' there had been half a dozen deaths i' the house, it could not be worse. Neither the squire nor miss hath touched food the whole day!"

There was, in truth, not a dry eye in the room, nor one whose voice did not seem somewhat obstructed with his emotions.

"Who told about the squire's losing the estate?" inquired Dickons.

"We heard of it but an hour or so, ago. Mr. Parkinson (it seems by the squire's orders) told Mr. Waters, and he told it to us; saying as how it was useless to keep such a thing secret, and that we might all know the occasion of so much trouble."

"Who's to ha' it then, instead of the squire?" at length inquired Tonson, in a voice half choked with rage and grief.

"Lord only knows at present. But whoever 'tis, there isn't one of us servants but will go with the squire and his—if it be even to prison."

"I'm Squire Aubrey's gamekeeper," quoth Tonson, his eye kindling as his countenance darkened. "It shall go hard if any one else ere hath a game!"

"But if there's law in the land, sure the justice must be wi' the squire—he and his family have had it so long," said one of the farmers.

"I'll tell you what, masters," said Pumpkin, "I shall be somewhat better pleased when Higgs here hath got that old creature safe under ground."

"Blind Bess!" exclaimed Tonson, with a very serious, not to say disturbed, countenance. "I wonder—sure! sure! that old witch can have had no hand in all this!"

"Poor old soul, not she! There be no such things as witches now-a-days," exclaimed Higgs. "Not she, I warrant me! She hath been ever befriended by the squire's family. She do it!"

"The sooner we get her under ground, for all that, the better, say I!" quoth Tonson, vehemently striking his hand on the table.

"The parson hath a choice sermon on 'The Flying Away of Riches,'" said Higgs, in a quaint, sad manner; "'tis to be hoped he'll preach from it the next Sunday."

Soon after this the little party dispersed, each oppressed with greater grief and amazement than he had ever known before. Bad news fly swiftly—and that which had just come from the Hall, within a very few hours of its having been told at the Aubrey Arms, had spread grief and consternation among high and low, for many miles round Yatton.

From Blackwood's Magazine.

## HYMNS OF A HERMIT.

### HYMN XII.

#### 1.

O'er throngs of men around I cast mine eyes,  
While each to separate work his hand applies;  
The mean who toil for food, the proud for fame,  
And crowds by custom led, with scarce an aim.

#### 2.

Here busy dwarfs gigantic shadows chase,  
As if they thus could grow a giant race;  
Unknowing what they are, they fain would be  
Such empty dreams as in their sleep they see.

#### 3.

Their lives, like glittering bubbles, mount the sky,  
Contemning earth, from whence they rose on high,  
A moment catch the stars' eternal rays,  
And burst and vanish in the moon's clear gaze:



## 4.

Or torn by passion, swoln with falsest pride,  
Betray'd by doubt that mocks each surer guide,  
The rebel heart, in self-enthroned disdain,  
Its lawless weakness boasts, and penal pain.

## 5.

Alone it loves to bleed and groan apart,  
And scorn the crowd who stir the seething mart,  
Who each will own, befool'd by ease and pelf,  
Nor earth nor heaven beyond his shrivell'd self.

## 6.

And yet, O God! within each darken'd soul  
Is life akin to thy creation's whole,  
That needs but will to see, and straight would find  
The world one frame for one pervading mind.

## 7.

In all things round one sacred power would know,  
From Thee diffused through all thy works below;  
In every breath of life would wear thy call,  
And all discern in each, and Thee in all.

## 8.

A truth too vast for spirits lost in sloth,  
By self-indulgence marr'd of nobler growth,  
Who bear about, in impotence and shame,  
Their human reason's visionary name.

## 9.

Oh! grant the crowds of earth may read thy plan,  
And strive to reach the hope design'd for man;  
Though now, shorn, stunted, twisted, wither'd, spent,  
We dare not dream how high thy love's intent.

## 10.

Oh, God! 'twere more than life to mouldering dust,  
The hour that kindled men to thoughtful trust—  
That taught our hearts to seek thy righteous will,  
And so with love thy wisdom's task fulfil.

## 11.

Redeem'd from fear, and wash'd from lustful blot,  
By faith we then might rise above our lot;  
And like thy chosen few, restored within,  
By hearts as morning pure might conquer sin!

## HYMN XIII.

## 1.

The stream of life from fountains flows,  
Conceal'd by sacred woods and caves;  
From crag to dell unchecked it goes,  
And hurrying fast from where it rose,  
In foam and flash exulting raves.

## 2.

But straight below the torrent's leap,  
Serenely bright its effluence lies,  
And waves that thundered down the steep  
Are hush'd in quiet, mute and deep,  
Reflecting rock, and trees, and skies.

## 3.

And 'mid the pool, disturb'd yet clear,  
The noisy gush that feeds it still

Is seen again descending sheer,  
A cataract within the mere,  
As bright as down the hill.

## 4.

A living picture, smooth and true,  
Of headlong fight and restless power,  
Whose burst for ever feeds anew  
The lake of fresh and silver dew  
That paints and drinks the stormy shower.

## 5.

So thought, with crystal mirror, shows  
Our human joy, and strife, and pain;  
And ghostly dreams, and passion's woes,  
The tide of failures, hates, and foes,  
Are softly figured there again.

## 6.

Do Thou, who pourest forth our days,  
With all their floods of life divine,  
Bestow thy Spirit's peaceful gaze,  
To still the surge those tumults raise,  
And make thy calm of being mine!

## HYMN XIV.

## 1.

Eternal Mind! Creation's Light and Lord!  
Thou trainest man to love thy perfect will,  
By love to know thy truth's obscurest word,  
And so his years with hallow'd life to fill;  
To own in all things round thy law's accord,  
Which bids all hope be strong to vanquish ill;  
Illumined thus by thy diffusive ray,  
The darken'd world and soul are bright with day.

## 2.

In storm, and flood, and all decays of time,  
In hunger, plagues, and man-devouring war;  
In all the boundless tracts of inward crime—  
In selfish hates, and lusts that deepest mar,  
In lazy dreams that clog each task sublime,  
In loveless doubts of truth's unsetting star;  
In all—thy spirit will not cease to brood  
With vital strength, unfolding all to good.

## 3.

The headlong cataract and tempest's roar,  
The rage of seas, and earthquake's hoarse dismay,  
The crush of empire, sapp'd by tears and gore,  
And shrieks of hearts their own corruption's prey—  
All sounds of death enforce thy righteous lore,  
In smoothest flow thy being's truth obey,  
And heard in ears from passion's witchery free,  
One endless music make—a hymn to Thee!

## 4.

But most, O God! the inward eyes of thought  
Discern thy laws in all that works within;  
The conscious will, by hard experience taught,  
Divines thy mercy shown by hate of sin;  
And hearts whose peace by shame and grief was bought,  
Thy blessings praise, that first in woe begin,  
For still on earthly pain's tormented ground  
Thy love's immortal flowers and fruits abound.

## 5.

Fair sight it is, and med'cinal for man,  
To see thy guidance lead the human breast;  
In life's unopen'd germs behold thy plan,  
Till 'mid the ripen'd soul it stands confest;  
From impulse too minute for us to scan,  
Awakening sense with love and purpose blest;  
And through confusion, error, trial, grief,  
Maturing reason, conscience, calm belief.

## 6.

This to have known, my soul be thankful thou!—  
This clear, ideal form of endless good,  
Which casts around the adoring learner's brow  
The ray that marks man's holiest brotherhood:  
Thus even from guilt's deep curse and slavish vow,  
And dreams whereby the light was long withstood,  
Thee, Lord! whose mind is rule supreme to all,  
Unveil'd we see, and hail thy wisdom's call.

## HYMN XV.

## 1.

When up to nightly skies we gaze,  
Where stars pursue their endless ways,  
We think we see from earth's low clod  
The wide and shining home of God.

## 2.

But could we rise to moon or sun,  
Or path where planets duly run,  
Still heaven would spread above us far,  
And earth remote would seem a star.

## 3.

'Tis vain to dream those tracts of space,  
With all their worlds approach his face:  
One glory fills each wheeling ball—  
One love has shaped and moved them all.

## 4.

This earth, with all its dust and tears,  
Is his no less than yonder spheres;  
And rain-drops weak, and grains of sand,  
Are stamp'd by his immediate hand.

## 5.

The rock, the wave, the little flower,  
All fed by streams of living power  
That spring from one Almighty will,  
Whate'er his thought conceives, fulfil.

## 6.

And is this all that man can claim?  
Is this our longing's final aim?  
To be like all things round—no more  
Than pebbles cast on Time's gray shore?

## 7.

Can man, no more than beast, aspire  
To know his being's awful Sire?  
And, born and lost on Nature's breast,  
No blessing seek but there to rest?

## 8.

Not this our doom, thou God benign!  
Whose rays on us unclouded shine:

Thy breath sustains yon fiery dome;  
But Man is most thy favour'd home.

## 9.

We view those halls of painted air,  
And own thy presence makes them fair;  
But dearer still to thee, O Lord!  
Is he whose thoughts to thine accord.

From the Dublin University Magazine.

## SCOTISH SONGS. BY THOMAS SMIBERT.

## MY JOHNNIE LAD.

Tune—"Cock up your beaver."

When first my dear Johnnie cam' into my sight,  
My heart and my e'en gat a stound o' delight,  
Sae kind were his words and sae comely his favour—  
Hey, my Johnnie lad, cock up your beaver.  
Nane o' the lave daured to stand by his side,  
His air was sae manly, it dang a' their pride;  
Kings might tak tellin's frae him in behavio'r—  
Hey, my Johnnie lad, cock up your beaver.

Down by the bank where the lang willow sprouts,  
We twa sat and look'd in the burnie for trouts;  
But sma' was the share that they had in the matter,  
We but gazed on ilk other's face in the water.  
I railed at the wind for a fop and a fule,  
When it cam' to put curls on the tap o' the pule;  
For it made my laddie's dear image to waver—  
Hey, my Johnnie lad, cock up your beaver.

Around me his arm he softly conveyed,  
Just to see how 'twad look in the water, he said;  
By right I suld maybe hae stoppit and chid him,  
But in troth nae heart had I to forbid him.  
Baulder he grew syne, and rievit a kiss,  
And, nae doubt, to let him was sairly amiss;  
But his breath than new hay was sweeter in flavour,  
Hey, my Johnnie lad, cock up your beaver.

He tauld me to look in the pule at my shade,  
And vowed that as it in my absence wad fade,  
Sae wad his heart sink when I was na mair near him,  
Wi' a kindly blink o' my e'e to cheer him.  
A promise I gied, and it's aye I'll no break,  
To gang to the kirk some guid day for his sake;  
I'll never find aye better wordy the favour,  
Sae hey, my Johnnie lad, cock up your beaver.

## BONNIE LAD THAT I LOE DEAR.

Tune—"Louis, what reck I by thee?"

Bonnie lad that I loe dear,  
If ye maun cross the billow,  
Dinna gang and leave me here  
To wear the waefu' willow.  
Tak the hand ye've yearned to win—  
For you frae a' I'll sever;  
Fareweel hame, and kith and kin—  
I'm Willie's ain for ever!

Far ayont Ontario's shore,  
We will hae our dwallin';  
Strife shall never dit our door,  
Nor care come near our hallan.  
They wi' love ne'er gree ava,  
And love will quit us never;  
Frien's and faes, fareweel to a'—  
I'm Willie's ain for ever!

## MASTER HUMPHREY'S CLOCK.

MASTER HUMPHREY, FROM HIS CLOCK-SIDE IN THE CHIMNEY-CORNER.

The reader must not expect to know where I live. At present, it is true, my abode may be a question of little or no import to any body, but if I should carry my readers with me, as I hope to do, and there should spring up, between them and me, feelings of homely affection and regard, attaching something of interest to matters ever so slightly connected with my fortunes or my speculations, even my place of residence might one day have a kind of charm for them. Bearing this possible contingency in mind, I wish them to understand in the outset, that they must never expect to know it.

I am not a churlish old man. Friendless I can never be, for all mankind are of my kindred, and I am on ill terms with no one member of my great family. But for many years I have led a lonely, solitary life;—what would I sought to heal, what sorrow to forget, originally, matters not now; it is sufficient that retirement has become a habit with me, and that I am unwilling to break the spell which for so long a time has shed its quiet influence upon my home and heart.

I live in a venerable suburb of London, in an old house, which in bygone days was a famous resort for merry roysterers and peerless ladies, long since departed. It is a silent shady place, with a paved court-yard so full of echoes, that sometimes I am tempted to believe that faint responses to the noises of old times linger there yet, and that these ghosts of sound haunt my footsteps as I pace it up and down. I am the more confirmed in this belief, because, of late years, the echoes that attend my walks have been less loud and marked than they were wont to be; and it is pleasanter to imagine in them the rustling of silk brocade, and the light step of some lovely girl, than to recognise in their altered note the failing tread of an old man.

Those who like to read of brilliant rooms and gorgeous furniture, would derive but little pleasure from a minute description of my simple dwelling. It is dear to me for the same reason that they would hold it in slight regard. Its worm-eaten doors, and low ceilings crossed by clumsy beams; its walls of wainscot, dark stairs, and gaping closets; its small chambers, communicating with each other by winding passages or narrow steps; its many nooks, scarce larger than its corner-cupboards; its very dust and dulness, are all dear to me. The moth and spider are my constant tenants, for in my house the one basks in his long sleep, and the other plies his busy loom, secure and undisturbed. I have a pleasure in thinking on a summer's day, how many butterflies have sprung for the first time into light and sunshine from some dark corner of these old walls.

When I first came to live here, which was many years ago, the neighbours were curious to know who I was, and whence I came, and why I lived so much alone. As time went on, and they still remained unsatisfied on these points, I became the centre of a popular ferment, extending for half a mile round, and in one direction for a full mile. Various rumours were circulated to my prejudice. I was a spy, an infidel, a conjuror, a kidnapper of children, a refugee, a priest, a monster. Mothers caught up their infants and ran into their

houses as I passed; men eyed me spitefully, and muttered threats and curses. I was the object of suspicion and distrust: ay, of downright hatred, too.

But when in course of time they found I did no harm, but, on the contrary, inclined towards them despite their unjust usage, they began to relent. I found my footsteps no longer dogged, as they had often been before, and observed that the women and children no longer retreated, but would stand and gaze at me as I passed their doors. I took this for a good omen, and waited patiently for better times. By degrees I began to make friends among these humble folks, and though they were yet shy of speaking, would give them "good day," and so pass on. In a little time, those whom I had thus accosted, would make a point of coming to their doors and windows at the usual hour, and nod or curtsy to me; children, too, came timidly within my reach, and ran away quite scared when I patted their heads and bade them be good at school. These little people soon grew more familiar. From exchanging mere words of course with my older neighbours, I gradually became their friend and adviser, the depository of their cares and sorrows, and sometimes, it may be, the reliever, in my small way, of their distresses. And now I never walk abroad, but pleasant recognitions and smiling faces wait on Master Humphrey.

It was a whim of mine, perhaps as a whet to the curiosity of my neighbours, and a kind of retaliation upon them for their suspicions,—it was, I say, a whim of mine, when I first took up my abode in this place, to acknowledge no other name than Humphrey. With my detractors, I was ugly Humphrey. When I began to convert them into friends, I was Mr. Humphrey, and old Mr. Humphrey. At length I settled down into plain Master Humphrey, which was understood to be the title most pleasant to my ear; and so completely a matter of course has it become, that sometimes when I am taking my morning walk in my little court-yard, I overhear my barber—who has a profound respect for me, and would not, I am sure, abridge my honours for the world—holding forth on the other side of the wall, touching the state of "Master Humphrey's" health, and communicating to some friend the substance of the conversation that he and Master Humphrey have had together in the course of the shaving which he has just concluded.

That I may not make acquaintance with my readers under false pretences, or give them cause to complain hereafter that I have withheld any matter which it was essential for them to have learnt at first, I wish them to know—and I smile sorrowfully to think that the time has been when the confession would have given me pain—that I am a mis-shapen, deformed, old man.

I have never been made a misanthrope by this cause. I have never been stung by any insult, nor wounded by any jest upon my crooked figure. As a child I was melancholy and timid, but that was because the gentle consideration paid to my misfortune sunk deep into my spirit and made me sad, even in those early days. I was but a very young creature when my poor mother died, and yet I remember that often when I hung around her neck, and oftener still when I played about the room before her, she would catch me to her bosom, and bursting into tears, soothe me with every term of fondness and affection. God knows I was a happy child at those times—happy to nestle in her breast—happy to weep when she did—happy in not knowing why.

These occasions are so strongly impressed upon my memory, that they seem to have occupied whole years.

I had numbered very few when they ceased for ever, but before then their meaning had been revealed to me.

I do not know whether all children are imbued with a quick perception of childish grace and beauty and a strong love for it, but I was. I had no thought that I remember, either that I possessed it myself or that I lacked it, but I admired it with an intensity I cannot describe. A little knot of playmates—they must have been beautiful, for I see them now—were clustered one day round my mother's knee in eager admiration of some picture representing a group of infant angels which she held in her hand. Whose the picture was, whether it was familiar to me or otherwise, or how all the children came to be there, I forget: I have some dim thought it was my birth-day, but the beginning of my recollection is that we were altogether in a garden, and it was summer weather—I am sure of that, for one of the little girls had roses in her sash. There were many lovely angels in this picture, and I remember the fancy coming upon me to point out which of them represented each child there, and that when I had gone through all my companions, I stopped and hesitated, wondering which was most like me. I remember the children looking at each other, and my turning red and hot, and their crowding round to kiss me, saying that they loved me all the same; and then, and when the old sorrow came into my dear mother's mild and tender look, the truth broke upon me for the first time, and I knew, while watching my awkward and ungainly sports, how keenly she had felt for her poor crippled boy.

I used frequently to dream of it afterwards, and now my heart aches for that child as if I had never been he, when I think how often he awoke from some fairy change to his own old form, and sobbed himself to sleep again.

Well, well—all these sorrows are past. My glancing at them may not be without its use, for it may help in some measure to explain why I have all my life been attached to the inanimate objects that people my chamber, and how I have come to look upon them rather in the light of old and constant friends, than as mere chairs and tables which a little money could replace at will.

Chief and first among all these is my clock—my old cheerful companionable clock. How can I ever convey to others an idea of the comfort and consolation that this old clock has been for years to me!

It is associated with my earliest recollections. It stood upon the staircase at home (I call it home still, mechanically) nigh sixty years ago. I like it for that, but it is not on that account, nor because it is a quaint old thing in a huge oaken case curiously and richly carved, that I prize it as I do. I incline to it as if it were alive, and could understand and give me back the love I bear it.

And what other thing that has not life could cheer me as it does; what other thing that has not life (I will not say how few things that have) could have proved the same patient, true, untiring friend! How often have I sat in the long winter evenings feeling such society in its cricket-voice, that raising my eyes from my book and looking gratefully towards it, the face reddened by the glow of the shining fire, has seemed to relax from its staid expression and to regard me kindly; how often in the summer twilight, when my thoughts have wandered back to a melancholy past, have its regular whisperings recalled them to the calm and peaceful present; how often in the dead tranquillity of night has its bell broken the oppressive silence, and seemed to give me assurance

that the old clock was still a faithful watcher at my chamber door! My easy chair, my desk, my ancient furniture, my very books, I can scarcely bring myself to love even these last, like my old clock!

It stands in a snug corner, midway between the fire-side and a low arched door leading to my bed-room. Its fame is diffused so extensively throughout the neighbourhood, that I have often the satisfaction of hearing the publican or the baker, and sometimes even the parish-clerk, petitioning my housekeeper (of whom I shall have much to say by and by,) to inform him the exact time by Master Humphrey's clock. My barber, to whom I have already referred, would sooner believe it than the sun. Nor are these its only distinctions. It has acquired, I am happy to say, another, inseparably connecting it not only with my enjoyments and reflections, but with those of other men; as I shall now relate.

I lived alone here for a long time without any friend or acquaintance. In the course of my wanderings by night and day, at all hours and seasons, in city streets and quiet country parts, I came to be familiar with certain faces, and to take it to heart as quite a heavy disappointment if they failed to present themselves each at its accustomed spot. But these were the only friends I knew, and beyond them I had none.

It happened, however, when I had gone on thus for a long time, that I formed an acquaintance with a deaf gentleman, which ripened into intimacy and close companionship. To this hour I am ignorant of his name. It is his humour to conceal it, or he has a reason and purpose for so doing. In either case I feel that he has a right to require a return of the trust he has reposed, and as he has never sought to discover my secret, I have never sought to penetrate his. There may have been something in this tacit confidence in each other, flattering and pleasant to us both, and it may have imparted in the beginning an additional zest, perhaps, to our friendship. Be this as it may, we have grown to be like brothers, and still I only know him as the deaf gentleman.

I have said that retirement has become a habit with me. When I add that the deaf gentleman and I have two friends, I communicate nothing which is inconsistent with that declaration. I spend many hours of every day in solitude and study, have no friends or change of friends but these, only see them at stated periods, and am supposed to be of a retired spirit by the very nature and object of our association.

We are men of secluded habits with something of a cloud upon our early fortunes, whose enthusiasm nevertheless has not cooled with age, whose spirit of romance is not yet quenched, who are content to ramble through the world in a pleasant dream, rather than ever waken again to its harsh realities. We are alchemists who would extract the essence of perpetual youth from dust and ashes, tempt coy truth in many light and airy forms from the bottom of her well, and discover one crumb of comfort or one grain of good in the commonest and least regarded matter that passes through our crucible. Spirits of past times, creatures of imagination, and people of to-day, are alike the objects of our seeking, and, unlike the objects of search with most philosophers, we can ensure their coming at our command.

The deaf gentleman and I first began to beguile our days with these fancies, and our nights in communicating them to each other. We are now four. But in my room there are six old chairs, and we have decided that the two empty seats shall always be placed at our



table when we meet, to remind us that we may yet increase our company by that number, if we should find two men to our mind. When one among us dies, his chair will always be set in its usual place, but never occupied again; and I have caused my will to be so drawn out, that when we are all dead, the house shall be shut up, and the vacant chairs still left in their accustomed places. It is pleasant to think that even then, our shades may, perhaps, assemble together as of yore we did, and join in ghostly converse.

One night in every week, as the clock strikes ten, we meet. At the second stroke of two, I am alone.

And now shall I tell how that my old servant, besides giving us note of time, and ticking cheerful encouragement of our proceedings, lends its name to our society, which for its punctuality and my love, is christened "Master Humphrey's Clock." Now shall I tell, how that in the bottom of the old dark closet where the steady pendulum throbs and beats with healthy action, though the pulse of him who made it stood still long ago and never moved again, there are piles of dusty papers constantly placed there by our hands, that we may link our enjoyments with my old friend, and draw means to beguile time from the heart of time itself! Shall I, or can I, tell with what a secret pride I open this repository when we meet at night, and still find new store of pleasure in my dear old clock!

Friend and companion of my solitude! mine is not a selfish love; I would not keep your merits to myself, but disperse something of pleasant association with your image through the whole wide world; I would have men couple with your name cheerful and healthy thoughts; I would have them believe that you keep true and honest time, and how would it gladden me to know that they recognised some hearty English work in Master Humphrey's Clock!

#### THE CLOCK-CASE.

It is my intention constantly to address my readers from the chimney-corner, and I would fain hope that such accounts as I shall give them of our histories and proceedings, our quiet speculations or more busy adventures, will never be unwelcome. Lest, however, I should grow prolix in the outset by lingering too long upon our little association, confounding the enthusiasm with which I regard this chief happiness of my life with that minor degree of interest which those to whom I address myself may be supposed to feel for it, I have deemed it expedient to break off as they have seen.

But still clinging to my old friend and naturally desirous that all its merits should be known, I am tempted to open (somewhat irregularly and against our laws, I must admit) the clock-case. The first roll of paper on which I lay my hand is in the writing of the deaf gentleman. I shall have to speak of him in my next paper, and how can I better approach that welcome task than by prefacing it with a production of his own pen, consigned to the safe keeping of my honest clock by his own hands!

The manuscript runs thus:

#### INTRODUCTION TO THE GIANT CHRONICLES.

Once upon a time, that is to say, in this our time,—the exact year, month, and day, are of no matter,—there

dwelt in the city of London a substantial citizen, who united in his single person the dignities of wholesale fruiterer, alderman, common councilman, and member of the worshipful company of Patten-makers: who had superadded to these extraordinary distinctions the important post and title of sheriff, and who at length, and to crown all, stood next in rotation for the high and honourable office of lord mayor.

He was a very substantial citizen indeed. His face was like the full moon in a fog, with two little holes punched out for his eyes, a very ripe pear stuck on for his nose, and a wide gash to serve for a mouth. The girth of his waistcoat was hung up and lettered in his tailor's shop as an extraordinary curiosity. He breathed like a heavy snorer, and his voice in speaking came thickly forth, as if it were oppressed and stifled by feather beds. He trod the ground like an elephant, and eat and drank like—like nothing but an alderman, as he was.

This worthy citizen had risen to his great eminence from small beginnings. He had once been a very lean, weazen little boy, never dreaming of carrying such a weight of flesh upon his bones or of money in his pockets, and glad enough to take his dinner at a baker's door, and his tea at a pump. But he had long ago forgotten all this, as it was proper that a wholesale fruiterer, alderman, common councilman, member of the worshipful company of patten-makers, past sheriff, and above all, a lord mayor that was to be, should; and he never forgot it more completely in all his life than on the eighth of November, in the year of his election to the great golden civic chair, which was the day before his grand dinner at the Guildhall.

It happened that as he sat that evening all alone in his counting house, looking over the bill of fare for next day, and checking off the fat capons in fifties and the turtle soup by the hundred quarts, for his private amusement—it happened that as he sat alone occupied in these pleasant calculations, a strange man came in and asked him how he did: adding, "If I am half as much changed as you, sir, you have no recollection of me, I am sure."

The strange man was not over and above well dressed, and was very far from being fat or rich-looking in any sense of the word, yet he spoke with a kind of modest confidence, and assumed an easy, gentlemanly sort of air, to which nobody but a rich man can lawfully presume. Besides this, he interrupted the good citizen just as he had reckoned three hundred and seventy-two fat capons and was carrying them over to the next column; and as if that were not aggravation enough, the learned recorder for the city of London had only ten minutes previously gone out at that very same door, and had turned round and said, "Good night, my lord." Yes, he had said, "my lord;"—he, a man of birth and education, of the honourable society of the middle temple, barrister at law—he who had an uncle in the house of commons, and an aunt almost but not quite in the house of lords (for she had married a feeble peer, and made him vote as she liked)—he, this man, this learned recorder, had said, "my lord." "I'll not wait till to-morrow to give you your title, my lord mayor," says he, with a bow and a smile; "you are lord mayor *de facto*, if not *de jure*. Good night, my lord!"

The lord mayor elect thought of this, and turning to the stranger, and sternly bidding him "go out of his private counting-house," brought forward the three hundred and seventy-two fat capons, and went on with the account.

"Do you remember," said the other, stepping forward,—"Do you remember little Joe Toddyhigh?"

The port wine fled for a moment from the fruiterer's nose as he muttered "Joe Toddyhigh! What about Joe Toddyhigh!"

"I am Joe Toddyhigh," cried the visitor. "Look at me, look hard at me;—harder, harder. You know me now? you know little Joe again? What a happiness to us both, to meet the very night before your grandeur! Oh! give me your hand, Jack—both hands—both, for the sake of old times."

"You pinch me, sir. You're a hurting of me," said the lord mayor elect pettishly; "don't—suppose anybody should come—Mr. Toddyhigh, sir."

"Mr. Toddyhigh!" repeated the other ruefully.

"Oh! don't bother," said the lord mayor elect, scratching his head. "Dear me! Why, I thought you was dead. What a fellow you are!"

Indeed, it was a pretty state of things, and worthy the tone of vexation and disappointment in which the lord mayor spoke. Joe Toddyhigh had been a poor boy with him at Hull, and had oftentimes divided his last penny and parted his last crust to relieve his wants, for though Joe was a destitute child in those times, he was as faithful and affectionate in his friendship as ever man of might could be. They parted one day to seek their fortunes in different directions. Joe went to sea, and the now wealthy citizen begged his way to London. They separated with many tears like foolish fellows as they were, and agreed to remain fast friends, and if they lived, soon to communicate again.

When he was an errand boy, and even in the early days of his apprenticeship, the citizen had many a time trudged to the post office to ask if there were any letter from poor little Joe, and had gone home again with tears in his eyes, when he found no news of his only friend. The world is a wide place, and it was a long time before the letter came; when it did, the writer was forgotten. It turned from white to yellow from lying in the post office with nobody to claim it, and in course of time was torn up with five hundred others, and sold for waste paper. And now at last, and when it might least have been expected, here was this Joe Toddyhigh turning up and claiming acquaintance with a great public character, who on the morrow would be cracking jokes with the prime minister of England, and who had only, at any time during the next twelve months, to say the word, and he could shut up temple bar, and make it no thoroughfare for the king himself!

"I am sure I don't know what to say, Mr. Toddyhigh," said the lord mayor elect; "I really don't. It's very inconvenient. I'd sooner have given twenty pound—it's very inconvenient, really."

A thought had struggled into his mind, that perhaps his old friend might say something passionate which would give him an excuse for being angry himself. No such thing. Joe looked at him steadily, but very mildly, and did not open his lips.

"Of course I shall pay you what I owe you," said the lord mayor elect, fidgeting in his chair. "You lent me—I think it was a shilling or some small coin—when we parted company, and that of course I shall pay, with good interest. I can pay my way with any man, and always have done. If you look into the Mansion House the day after to-morrow—some time after dusk—and ask for my private clerk, you'll find he has a draft for you. I haven't got time to say anything more just now, unless—" he hesitated, for, coupled with a strong desire to

glitter for once in all his glory in the eyes of his former companion, was a distrust of his appearance which might be more shabby than he could tell by that feeble light—"unless you'd like to come to the dinner to-morrow. I don't mind your having this ticket, if you like to take it. A great many people would give their ears for it, I can tell you."

His old friend took the card without speaking a word, and instantly departed. His sunburnt face and grey hair were present to the citizen's mind for a moment; but by the time he reached three hundred and eighty-one fat capons, he had quite forgotten him.

Joe Toddyhigh had never been in the capital of Europe before, and he wandered up and down the streets that night, amazed at the number of churches and other public buildings, the splendour of the shops, the riches that were heaped up on every side, the glare of light in which they were displayed, and the concourse of people who hurried to and fro, indifferent apparently to all the wonders that surrounded them. But in all the long streets and broad squares, there were none but strangers; it was quite a relief to turn down a byway and hear his own footsteps on the pavement. He went home to his inn; thought that London was a dreary, desolate place, and felt disposed to doubt the existence of one true-hearted man in the whole worshipful company of patten-makers. Finally, he went to bed, and dreamed that he and the lord mayor elect were boys again.

He went next day to the dinner, and when, in a burst of light and music, and in the midst of splendid decorations and surrounded by brilliant company, his former friend appeared at the head of the hall, and was hailed with shouts and cheering, he cheered and shouted with the best, and for the moment could have cried. The next moment he cursed his weakness in behalf of a man so changed and selfish, and quite hated a jolly-looking old gentleman opposite for declaring himself, in the pride of his heart, a patten-maker.

As the banquet proceeded, he took more and more to heart the rich citizen's unkindness,—and that, not from any envy, but because he felt that a man of his state and fortune could all the better afford to recognise an old friend, even if he were poor and obscure. The more he thought of this, the more lonely and sad he felt. When the company dispersed and adjourned to the ball-room, he paced the hall and passages alone, ruminating in a very melancholy condition upon the disappointment he had experienced.

It chanced, while he was lounging about in this moody state, that he stumbled upon a flight of stairs, dark, steep and narrow, which he ascended without any thought about the matter, and so came into a little music-gallery, empty and deserted. From this elevated post, which commanded the whole hall, he amused himself in looking down upon the attendants, who were clearing away the fragments of the feast very lazily, and drinking out of all the bottles and glasses with most commendable perseverance.

His attention gradually relaxed, and he fell fast asleep.

When he awoke, he thought there must be something the matter with his eyes: but, rubbing them a little, he soon found that the moonlight was really streaming through the east window, that the lamps were all extinguished, and that he was alone. He listened, but no distant murmur in the echoing passages, not even the shutting of a door, broke the deep silence; he groped his way down the stairs, and found that the door at the

bottom was locked on the other side. He began now to comprehend that he must have slept a long time, that he had been overlooked, and was shut up there for the night.

His first sensation, perhaps, was not altogether a comfortable one, for it was a dark, chilly, earthy-smelling place, and something too large for a man so situated to feel at home in. However, when the momentary consternation of his surprise was over, he made light of the accident, and resolved to feel his way up the stairs again, and make himself as comfortable as he could in the gallery until morning. As he turned to execute this purpose, he heard the clocks strike three.

Any such invasion of a dead stillness as the striking of distant clocks, causes it to appear the more intense and insupportable when the sound has ceased. He listened with strained attention in the hope that some clock, lagging behind its fellows, had yet to strike—looking all the time into the profound darkness before him until it seemed to weave itself into a black tissue, patterned with a hundred reflections of his own eyes. But the bells had all pealed out their warning for that once, and the gust of wind that moaned through the place seemed cold and heavy with their iron breath.

The time and circumstances were favourable to reflection. He tried to keep his thoughts to the current, unpleasant though it was, in which they had moved all day, and to think with what a romantic feeling he had looked forward to shaking his old friend by the hand before he died, and what a wide and cruel difference there was between the meeting they had had, and that which he had so often and so long anticipated. Still he was disordered by waking to such sudden loneliness, and could not prevent his mind from running upon odd tales of people of undoubted courage, who, being shut up by night in vaults or churches, or other dismal places, had scaled great heights to get out, and fled from silence as they had never done from danger. This brought to his mind the moonlight through the window, and bethinking himself of it, he groped his way back up the crooked stairs—but very stealthily, as though he were fearful of being overheard.

He was very much astonished when he approached the gallery again, to see a light in the building; still more so, on advancing hastily and looking round, to observe no visible source from which it could proceed. But how much greater yet was his astonishment at the spectacle which this light revealed!

The statues of the two giants, Gog and Magog, each above fourteen feet in height, those which succeeded to still older and more barbarous figures after the Great Fire of London, and which stand in the Guildhall to this day, were endowed with life and motion. These guardian genii of the city had quitted their pedestals, and reclined in easy attitudes in the great stained glass window. Between them was an ancient cask, which seemed to be full of wine; for the younger giant, clapping his huge hand upon it, and throwing up his mighty leg, burst into an exulting laugh, which reverberated through the hall like thunder.

Joe Toddyhigh instinctively stooped down, and, more dead than alive, felt his hair stand on end, his knees knock together, and a cold damp break out upon his forehead. But even at that minute curiosity prevailed over every other feeling, and somewhat reassured by the good humour of the giants and their apparent unconsciousness of his presence, he crouched in a corner of the gal-

lery, in as small a space as he could, and peeping between the rails, observed them closely.

#### FIRST NIGHT OF THE GIANT CHRONICLES.

Turning towards his companion, the elder giant uttered these words in a grave majestic tone:—

“Magog, does boisterous mirth besem the Giant Warder of this ancient city? Is this becoming demeanour for a watchful spirit over whose bodiless head so many years have rolled, so many changes swept like empty air—in whose impalpable nostrils the scent of blood and crime, pestilence, cruelty and horror, has been familiar as breath to mortals—in whose sight Time has gathered in the harvest of centuries, and garnered so many crops of human pride, affections, hopes, and sorrows? Bethink you of our compact. The night wanes; feasting, revelry and music have encroached upon our usual hours of solitude, and morning will be here apace. Ere we are stricken mute again, bethink you of our compact.”

Pronouncing these latter words with more of impatience than quite accorded with his apparent age and gravity, the giant raised a long pole (which he still bears in his hand) and tapped his brother giant rather smartly on the head: indeed the blow was so smartly administered, that the latter quickly withdrew his lips from the cask to which they had been applied, and catching up his shield and halbert assumed an attitude of defence. His irritation was but momentary, for he laid these weapons aside as hastily as he had assumed them, and said as he did so:—

“You know, Gog, old friend, that when we animate these shapes which the Londoners of old assigned (and not unworthily) to the guardian genii of their city, we are susceptible of some of the sensations which belong to human kind. Thus when I taste wine, I feel blows; when I relish the one, I disrelish the other. Therefore, Gog, the more especially as your arm is none of the lightest, keep your good staff by your side, else we may chance to differ. Peace be between us.”

“Amen!” said the other, leaning his staff in the window corner; “why did you laugh just now?”—

“To think,” replied the Giant Magog, laying his hand upon the cask, “of him who owned this wine, and kept it in the cellar hoarded from the light of day, for thirty years, ‘till it should be fit to drink,’ quoth he. He was two score and ten years old when he buried it beneath his house, and yet never thought that he might be scarcely ‘fit to drink’ when the wine became so. I wonder it never occurred to him to make himself unfit to be eaten. There is very little of him left by this time.”—

“The night is waning,” said Gog mournfully.

“I know it,” replied his companion, “and I see you are impatient. But look. Through the eastern window placed opposite to us, that the first beams of the rising sun may every morning gild our giant faces—the moon-rays fall upon the pavement in a stream of light that to my fancy sinks through the cold stone and gushes into the old crypt below. The night is scarcely past its noon, and our great charge is sleeping heavily.”

They ceased to speak, and looked upward at the moon. The sight of their large black rolling eyes filled Joe Toddyhigh with such horror that he could scarcely draw his breath. Still they took no note of him, and appeared to believe themselves quite alone.

“Our compact,” said Magog after a pause, “is, if I understand it, that, instead of watching here in silence,

through the dreary nights, we entertain each other with stories of our past experience,—with tales of the past, the present, and the future,—with legends of London and her sturdy citizens from the old simple times. That every night at midnight when Saint Paul's bell tolls out one and we may move and speak, we thus discourse, nor leave such themes till the first gray gleam of day shall strike us dumb. Is that our bargain, brother?"

"Yet," said the Giant Gog, "that is the league between us, who guard this city, by day in spirit, and by night in body also; and never on ancient holidays have its conduits run wine more merrily than we will pour forth our legendary lore. We are old chroniclers from this time hence. The crumbled walls encircle us once more, the postern-gates are closed, the drawbridge is up, and pent in its narrow den beneath, the water foams and struggles with the sunken starlings. Jerkins and quarter-staves are in the streets again, the nightly watch is set, the rebel, sad and lonely in his Tower dungeon, tries to sleep and weeps for home and children. Aloft upon the gates and walls are noble heads, glaring fiercely down upon the dreaming city, and vexing the hungry dogs that scent them in the air and tear the ground beneath with dismal howlings. The axe, the block, the rack, in their dark chambers give signs of recent use. The Thames floating past long lines of cheerful windows whence come a burst of music and a stream of light, hears sullenly to the palace wall the last red stain brought on the tide from Traitor's-gate. But your pardon, brother. The night wears, and I am talking idly."

The other giant appeared to be entirely of this opinion, for during the foregoing rhapsody of his fellow-sentinel he had been scratching his head with an air of comical uneasiness, or rather with an air that would have been very comical if he had been a dwarf or an ordinary sized man. He winked too, and though it could not be doubted for a moment that he winked to himself, still he certainly cocked his enormous eye towards the gallery where the listener was concealed. Nor was this all, for he gaped; and when he gaped, Joe was horribly reminded of the popular prejudice on the subject of giants, and of their fabled power of smelling out Englishmen, however closely concealed.

His alarm was such that he nearly swooned, and it was some little time before his power of sight or hearing was restored. When he recovered he found that the elder giant was pressing the younger to commence the chronicles, and that the latter was endeavouring to excuse himself, on the ground that the night was far spent and it would be better to wait until the next. Well assured by this that he was certainly about to begin directly, the listener collected his faculties by a great effort, and distinctly heard Magog express himself to the following effect:—

In the sixteenth century and in the reign of Queen Elizabeth of glorious memory (albeit many of her golden days are rusted with blood) there lived in the city of London a bold young 'prentice who loved his master's daughter. There were no doubt within the walls a great many young 'prentices in this condition, but I speak of only one, and his name was Hugh Graham.

This Hugh was apprenticed to an honest bowyer who dwelt in the ward of Cheype, and was rumoured to possess great wealth. Rumour was quite as infallible in those days as at the present time, but it happened then as now, to be sometimes right by accident. It stumbled upon the truth when it gave the old bowyer a mint of

money. His trade had been a profitable one in the time of King Henry the Eighth, who encouraged English archery to the utmost, and he had been prudent and discreet. Thus it came to pass that Mistress Alice his only daughter was the richest heiress in all his wealthy ward. Young Hugh had often maintained with staff and cudgel that she was the handsomest. To do him justice, I believe she was.

If he could have gained the heart of pretty Mistress Alice by knocking this conviction into stubborn people's heads, Hugh would have had no cause to fear. But though the bowyer's daughter smiled in secret to hear of his doughty deeds for her sake, and though her little waiting-woman reported all her smiles (and many more) to Hugh, and though he was at a vast expense in kisses and small coin to recompense her fidelity, he made no progress in his love. He durst not whisper it to Mistress Alice save on sure encouragement, and that she never gave him. A glance of her dark eye as she sat at the door on a summer's evening after prayer time, while he and the neighbouring 'prentices exercised themselves in the street with blunted sword and buckler, would fire Hugh's blood so that none could stand before him; but then she glanced at others quite as kindly as on him, and where was the use of cracking crowns if Mistress Alice smiled upon the cracked as well as on the cracker?

Still Hugh went on, and loved her more and more. He thought of her all day, and dreamed of her all night long. He treasured up her every word and gesture, and had a palpitation of the heart whenever he heard her footstep on the stairs or her voice in an adjoining room. To him, the old bowyer's house was haunted by an angel; there was enchantment in the air and space in which she moved. It would have been no miracle to Hugh if flowers had sprung from the rush-strewn floors beneath the tread of lovely Mistress Alice.

Never did 'prentice long to distinguish himself in the eyes of his lady-love so ardently as Hugh. Sometimes he pictured to himself the house taking fire by night, and he, when all drew back in fear, rushing through flame and smoke and bearing her from the ruins in his arms. At other times he thought of a rising of fierce rebels, an attack upon the city, a strong assault upon the bowyer's house in particular, and he falling on the threshold pierced with numberless wounds in defence of Mistress Alice. If he could only enact some prodigy of valour, do some wonderful deed and let her know that she had inspired it, he thought he could die contented.

Sometimes the bowyer and his daughter would go out to supper with a worthy citizen at the fashionable hour of six o'clock, and on such occasions Hugh wearing his blue 'prentice cloak as gallantly as 'prentice might, would attend with a lantern and his trusty club to escort them home. These were the brightest moments of his life. To hold the light while Mistress Alice picked her steps, to touch her hand as he helped her over broken ways, to have her leaning on his arm—it sometimes even came to that—this was happiness indeed!

When the nights were fair, Hugh followed in the rear, his eyes riveted on the graceful figure of the bowyer's daughter as she and the old man moved on before him. So they threaded the narrow winding streets of the city, now passing beneath the overhanging gables of old wooden houses whence creaking signs projected into the street, and now emerging from some dark and frowning gateway into the clear moonlight. At such times, or when the shouts of straggling brawlers met her ear,



the bowyer's daughter would look timidly back at Hugh beseeching him to draw nearer; and then how he grasped his club and longed to do battle with a dozen rufflers, for the love of Mistress Alice!

The old bowyer was in the habit of lending money on interest to the gallants of the court, and thus it happened that many a richly-dressed gentleman dismounted at his door. More waving plumes and gallant steeds, indeed, were seen at the bowyer's house, and more embroidered silks and velvets sparkled in his dark shop and darker private closet than at any merchant's in the city. In those times no less than in the present it would seem that the richest-looking cavaliers often wanted money the most.

Of these glittering clients there was one who always came alone. He was always nobly mounted, and having no attendant gave his horse in charge to Hugh while he and the bowyer were closeted within. Once as he sprang into the saddle Mistress Alice was seated at an upper window, and before she could withdraw he had doffed his jewelled cap and kissed his hand. Hugh watched him caracoling down the street, and burnt with indignation. But how much deeper was the glow that reddened in his cheeks when raising his eyes to the casement he saw that Alice watched the stranger too!

He came again and often, each time arrayed more gaily than before, and still the little casement showed him Mistress Alice. At length one heavy day, she fled from home. It had cost her a hard struggle, for all her old father's gifts were strewn about her chamber as if she had parted from them one by one, and knew that the time must come when these tokens of his love would wring her heart—yet she was gone.

She left a letter commending her poor father to the care of Hugh, and wishing he might be happier than he could ever have been with her, for he deserved the love of a better and purer heart than she had to bestow. The old man's forgiveness (she said) she had no power to ask, but she prayed God to bless him—and so ended with a blot upon the paper where her tears had fallen.

At first the old man's wrath was kindled, and he carried his wrong to the queen's throne itself; but there was no redress he learnt at court, for his daughter had been conveyed abroad. This afterwards appeared to be the truth, as there came from France, after an interval of several years, a letter in her hand. It was written in trembling characters, and almost illegible. Little could be made out, save that she often thought of home and her old dear pleasant room—and that she had dreamt her father was dead and had not blessed her—and that her heart was breaking.

The poor old bowyer lingered on, never suffering Hugh to quit his sight, for he knew now that he had loved his daughter, and that was the only link that bound him to earth. It broke at length, and he died, bequeathing his old 'prentice his trade and all his wealth, and solemnly charging him, with his last breath, to revenge his child if ever he who had worked her misery crossed his path in life again.

From the time of Alice's flight, the tilting-ground, the fields, the fencing-school, the summer evening sports, knew Hugh no more. His spirit was dead within him. He rose to great eminence and repute among the citizens, but he was never seen to smile, and never mingled in their revelries or rejoicings. Brave, humane, and generous, he was loved by all. He was pitied too by those who knew his story; and these were so many, that when he walked along the streets alone at dusk, even the rude

common people doffed their caps, and mingled a rough air of sympathy with their respect.

One night in May—it was her birth-night, and twenty years since she had left her home—Hugh Graham sat in the room she had hallowed in his boyish days. He was now a gray-haired man, though still in the prime of life. Old thoughts had borne him company for many hours, and the chamber had gradually got quite dark, when he was roused by a low knocking at the outer door.

He hastened down, and, opening it, saw by the light of a lamp which he had seized in the way, a female figure crouching in the portal. It hurried swiftly past him, and glided up the stairs. He looked out for pursuers. There were none in sight.

He was inclined to think it a vision of his own brain, when suddenly a vague suspicion of the truth flashed upon his mind. He barred the door, and hastened wildly back. Yes, there she was—there, in the chamber he had quitted,—there, in her old innocent happy home, so changed that none but he could trace one gleam of what she had been—there upon her knees—with her hands clasped in agony and shame before her burning face.

"My God, my God!" she cried, "now strike me dead! Though I have brought death and shame and sorrow on this roof, oh, let me die at home in mercy!"

There was no tear upon her face then, but she trembled and glanced round the chamber. Every thing was in its old place. Her bed looked as if she had risen from it but that morning. The sight of these familiar objects marking the dear remembrance in which she had been held, and the blight she had brought upon herself, was more than the woman's better nature that had carried her there, could bear. She wept and fell upon the ground.

A rumour was spread about, in a few days' time, that the bowyer's cruel daughter had come home, and that Master Hugh Graham had given her lodging in his house. It was rumoured, too, that he had resigned her fortune, in order that she might bestow it in acts of charity, and that he had vowed to guard her in her solitude, but that they were never to see each other more. These rumours greatly incensed all virtuous wives and daughters in the ward, especially when they appeared to receive some corroboration from the circumstance of Master Graham taking up his abode in another tenement hard by. The estimation in which he was held, however, forbade any questioning on the subject, and as the bowyer's house was close shut up, and nobody came forth when public shows and festivities were in progress, or to flaunt in the public walks, or to buy new fashions at the mercers' booths, all the well-conducted females agreed among themselves that there could be no woman there.

These reports had scarcely died away when the wonder of every good citizen, male and female, was utterly absorbed and swallowed up by a royal proclamation, in which her majesty, strongly censuring the practice of wearing long Spanish rapiers of preposterous length (as being a bullying and swaggering custom, tending to bloodshed and public disorder) commanded that on a particular day therein named, certain grave citizens should repair to the city gates, and there, in public, break all rapiers worn or carried by persons claiming admission, that exceeded, though it were only by a quarter of an inch, three standard feet in length.

Royal proclamations usually take their course, let the public wonder never so much. On the appointed day

two citizens of high repute took up their stations at each of the gates, attended by a party of the city guard: the main body to enforce the queen's will, and take custody of all such rebels (if any) as might have the temerity to dispute it: and a few to bear the standard measures and instruments for reducing all unlawful sword-blades to the prescribed dimensions. In pursuance of these arrangements, Master Graham and another were posted at Lud Gate, on the hill before Saint Paul's.

A pretty numerous company were gathered together at this spot, for, besides the officers in attendance to enforce the proclamation, there was a motley crowd of lookers-on of various degrees, who raised from time to time such shouts and cries as the circumstances called forth. A spruce young courtier was the first who approached; he unsheathed a weapon of burnished steel that shone and glistened in the sun, and handed it with the newest air to the officer, who, finding it exactly three feet long, returned it with a bow. Thereupon the gallant raised his hat and crying, "God save the queen," passed on amidst the plaudits of the mob. Then came another—a better courtier still—who wore a blade but two feet long, wherewith the people laughed, much to the disparagement of his honour's dignity. Then came a third, a sturdy old officer of the army, girded with a rapier at least a foot and a half beyond her majesty's pleasure; at him they raised a great shout, and most of the spectators (but especially those who were armourers or cutlers) laughed very heartily at the breakage which would ensue. But they were disappointed, for the old campaigner, coolly unbuckling his sword and bidding his servant to carry it home again, passed through unarmed, to the great indignation of all the spectators. They relieved themselves in some degree by hooting a tall blustering fellow with a prodigious weapon, who stopped short on coming in sight of the preparations, and after a little consideration turned back again; but all this time no rapier had been broken although it was high noon, and all cavaliers of any quality or appearance were taking their way towards Saint Paul's church-yard.

During these proceedings Master Graham had stood apart, strictly confining himself to the duty imposed upon him, and taking little heed of any thing beyond. He stepped forward now as a richly dressed gentleman on foot, followed by a single attendant, was seen advancing up the hill.

As this person drew nearer, the crowd stopped their clamour and bent forward with eager looks. Master Graham standing alone in the gateway, and the stranger coming slowly towards him, they seemed, as it were, set face to face. The nobleman (for he looked one) had a haughty and disdainful air, which bespoke the slight estimation in which he held the citizen. The citizen on the other hand preserved the resolute bearing of one who was not to be frowned down or daunted, and who cared very little for any nobility but that of worth and manhood. It was perhaps some consciousness on the part of each, of these feelings in the other, that infused a more stern expression into their regards as they came closer together.

"Your rapier, worthy sir!"

At the instant that he pronounced these words Graham started, and falling back some paces, laid his hand upon the dagger in his belt.

"You are the man whose horse I used to hold before the bowyer's door! You are that man! Speak!"

"Out, you 'prentice hound!" said the other.

"You are he! I know you well!" cried Graham. "Let no man step between us two, or I shall be his murderer." With that he drew his dagger and rushed in upon him.

The stranger had drawn his weapon from the scabbard ready for the scrutiny, before a word was spoken. He made a thrust at his assailant, but the dagger which Graham clutched in his left hand being the dirk in use at that time for parrying such blows, promptly turned the point aside. They closed. The dagger fell rattling upon the ground, and Graham wresting his adversary's sword from his grasp, plunged it through his heart. As he drew it out it snapped in two, leaving a fragment in the dead man's body.

All this passed so swiftly that the bystanders looked on without an effort to interfere; but the man was no sooner down than an uproar broke forth which rent the air. The attendant rushing through the gate proclaimed that his master, a nobleman, had been set upon and slain by a citizen; the word quickly spread from mouth to mouth; Saint Paul's cathedral and every book-shop, ordinary, and smoking-house in the church-yard poured out its stream of cavaliers and their followers, who, mingling together in a dense tumultuous body, struggled, sword in hand, towards the spot.

With equal impetuosity and stimulating each other by loud cries and shouts, the citizens and common people took up the quarrel on their side, and encircling Master Graham a hundred deep, forced him from the gate. In vain he waved the broken sword above his head, crying that he would die on London's threshold for their sacred homes. They bore him on, and ever keeping him in the midst, so that no man could attack him, fought their way into the city.

The clash of swords and roar of voices, the dust and heat and pressure, the trampling under foot of men, the distracted looks and shrieks of women at the windows above as they recognised their relatives or lovers in the crowd, the rapid tolling of alarm bells, the furious rage and passion of the scene were frightful. Those who being on the outskirts of each crowd could use their weapons with effect fought desperately, while those behind maddened with baffled rage struck at each other over the heads of those before them, and crushed their own fellows. Wherever the broken sword was seen above the people's heads, towards that spot the cavaliers made a new rush. Every one of these charges was marked by sudden gaps in the throng where men were trodden down, but as fast as they were made, the tide swept over them, and still the multitude pressed on again, a confused mass of swords, clubs, staves, broken plumes, fragments of rick cloaks and doublets, and angry bleeding faces, all mixed up together in inextricable disorder.

The design of the people was to force Master Graham to take refuge in his dwelling, and to defend it until the authorities could interfere, or they could gain time for parley. But either from ignorance, or in the confusion of the moment, they stopped at his old house, which was closely shut. Some time was lost in beating the doors open and passing him to the front. About a score of the boldest of the other party threw themselves into the torrent while this was being done, and reaching the door at the same moment with himself, cut him off from his defenders.

"I never will turn in such a righteous cause, so help me Heaven!" cried Graham, in a voice that at last made itself heard, and confronting them as he spoke. "Least of all will I turn upon this threshold which owes its

desolation to such men as ye. I give no quarter, and I will have none! Strike!"

For a moment they stood at bay. At that moment a shot from an unseen hand—apparently fired by some person who had gained access to one of the opposite houses—struck Graham in the brain and he fell dead. A wail was heard in the air; many people in the concourse cried that they had seen a spirit glide across the little casement window of the bowyer's house.

A dead silence succeeded. After a short time some of the flushed and heated throng lay down their arms and softly carried the body within doors. Others fell off or slunk away in knots of two or three, others whispered together in groups, and before a numerous guard, which then rode up, could muster in the street, it was nearly empty.

Those who carried Master Graham to the bed up stairs were shocked to see a woman lying beneath the window with her hands clasped together. After trying to recover her in vain, they laid her near the citizen, who still retained, tightly grasped in his right hand, the first and last sword that was broken that day at Lud Gate.

The giant uttered these concluding words with sudden precipitation, and on the instant the strange light which had filled the hall, faded away. Joe glanced involuntarily at the eastern window, and saw the first pale gleam of morning. He turned his head again towards the other window in which the giants had been seated. It was empty. The cask of wine was gone, and he could dimly make out that the two great figures stood mute and motionless upon their pedestals.

After rubbing his eyes and wondering for full half an hour, during which time he observed morning come creeping on, he yielded to the drowsiness which overpowered him, and fell into a refreshing slumber. When he awoke it was broad day; the building was open, and workmen were busily engaged in removing the vestiges of last night's feast.

Stealing gently down the little stairs, and assuming the air of some early loungee who had dropped in from the street, he walked up to the foot of each pedestal in turn, and attentively examined the figure it supported. There could be no doubt about the features of either; he recollected the exact expression they had worn at different passages of their conversation, and recognised in every line and lineament the giants of the night. Assured that it was no vision, but that he had heard and seen with his own proper senses, he walked forth, determining at all hazards to conceal himself in the Guildhall again that evening. He further resolved to sleep all day, so that he might be very wakeful and vigilant, and above all that he might take notice of the figures at the precise moment of their becoming animated and subsiding into their old state, which he greatly reproached himself for not having done already.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

##### To Master Humphrey.

"Sir,—Before you proceed any further in your account of your friends and what you say and do when you meet together, excuse me if I proffer my claim to be elected to one of the vacant chairs in that old room of yours. Don't reject me without full consideration, for if you do, you'll be sorry for it afterwards—you will, upon my life.

"I inclose my card, sir, in this letter. I never was ashamed of my name, and I never shall be. I am con-

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sidered a devilish gentlemanly fellow, and I act up to the character. If you want a reference, ask any of the men at our club. Ask any fellow who goes there to write his letters, what sort of conversation mine is. Ask him if he thinks I have the sort of voice that will suit your deaf friend, and make him hear if he can hear any thing at all. Ask the servants what they think of me. There's not a rascal among 'em, sir, but will tremble to hear my name. That reminds me—don't you say too much about that housekeeper of yours; it's a low subject, damned low.

"I tell you what, sir, if you vote me into one of those empty chairs, you'll have among you a man with a fund of gentlemanly information that'll rather astonish you. I can let you into a few anecdotes about some fine women of title, that are quite high life, sir—the tip-top sort of thing. I know the name of every man who has been out on an affair of honour within the last five-and-twenty years; I know the private particulars of every cross and squabble that has taken place upon the turf, at the gaming-table or elsewhere, during the whole of that time. I have been called the gentlemanly chronicle. You may consider yourself a lucky dog; upon my soul you may congratulate yourself, though I say so.

"It's an uncommon good notion that of yours, not letting any body know where you live. I have tried it, but there has always been an anxiety respecting me which has found me out. Your deaf friend is a cunning fellow to keep his name so close. I have tried that too, but have always failed. I shall be proud to make his acquaintance—tell him so, with my compliments.

"You must have been a queer fellow when you were a child, confounded queer. It's odd all that about the picture in your first paper—prosy, but told in a devilish gentlemanly sort of a way. In places like that, I could come in with great effect with a touch of life—don't you feel that?

"I am anxiously waiting for your next paper to know whether your friends live upon the premises, and at your expense, which I take it for granted is the case. If I am right in this impression I know a charming fellow (an excellent companion and most delightful company) who will be proud to join you. Some years ago he seconded a great many prize-fighters, and once fought an amateur match himself; since then he has driven several mails, broken at different periods all the lamps on the right-hand side of Oxford street, and six times carried away every bell-handle in Bloomsbury square, besides turning off the gas in various thoroughfares. In point of gentlemanliness he is unrivaled, and I should say, that next to myself, he is of all men the best suited to your purpose.

"Expecting your reply,

"I am,

"&c. &c."

Master Humphrey informs this gentleman that his application, both as it concerns himself and his friend, is rejected.

MASTER HUMPHREY, FROM HIS CLOCK-SIDE IN THE CHIMNEY-CORNER.

My old companion tells me it is midnight. The fire glows brightly, crackling with a sharp and cheerful sound as if it loved to burn. The merry cricket on the hearth (my constant visitor), this ruddy blaze, my clock, and I, seem to share the world among us, and to be the only things awake. The wind, high and boisterous but now,

has died away, and hoarsely mutters in its sleep. I love all times and seasons each in its turn, and am apt perhaps to think the present one the best; but past or coming, I always love this peaceful time of night, when long buried thoughts, favoured by the gloom and silence, steal from their graves and haunt the scenes of faded happiness and hope.

The popular faith in ghosts has a remarkable affinity with the whole current of our thoughts at such an hour as this, and seems to be their necessary and natural consequence. For who can wonder that man should feel a vague belief in tales of disembodied spirits wandering through those places which they once dearly affected, when he himself, scarcely less separated from his old world than they, is for ever lingering upon past emotions and by-gone times, and hovering, the ghost of his former self, about the places and people that warmed his heart of old? It is thus that I prow around my buried treasure (though not of gold or silver) and mourn my loss; it is thus that I revisit the ashes of extinguished fires, and take my silent stand at old bedsides. If my spirit should ever glide back to this chamber when my body is mingled with the dust, it will but follow the course it often took in the old man's lifetime, and add but one more change to the subjects of its contemplation.

In all my idle speculations I am greatly assisted by various legends connected with my venerable house, which are current in the neighbourhood, and are so numerous that there is scarce a cupboard or corner that has not some dismal story of its own. When I first entertained thoughts of becoming its tenant, I was assured that it was haunted from roof to cellar; and I believe the bad opinion in which my neighbours once held me had its rise in my not being torn to pieces, or, at least, distracted with terror on the night I took possession, in either of which case, I should doubtless have arrived by a short cut at the very summit of popularity.

But traditions and rumours all taken into account, who so abets me in every fancy, and chimes with my every thought, as my dear deaf friend; and how often have I cause to bless the day that brought us two together! Of all days in the year I rejoice to think that it should have been Christmas-day, with which from childhood we associate something friendly, hearty, and sincere.

I had walked out to cheer myself with the happiness of others, and in the little tokens of festivity and rejoicing of which the streets and houses present so many on that day, had lost some hours. Now I stopped to look at a merry party hurrying through the snow on foot to their place of meeting, and now turned back to see a whole coachful of children safely deposited at the welcome house. At one time, I admired how carefully the working-man carried the baby in its gaudy hat and feathers, and how his wife, trudging patiently on behind, forgot even her care of her gay clothes, in exchanging greetings with the child as it crowded and laughed over the father's shoulder; at another, I pleased myself with some passing scene of gallantry or courtship, and was glad to believe that for a season half the world of poverty was gay.

As the day closed in, I still rambled through the streets, feeling a companionship in the bright fires that cast their warm reflection on the windows as I passed, and losing all sense of my own loneliness in imagining the sociality and kind fellowship that every where prevailed. At length I happened to stop before a tavern, and encountering a bill of fare in the window, it all at once brought

into my head to wonder what kind of people dined alone in taverns upon Christmas-day.

Solitary men are accustomed, I suppose, unconsciously to look upon solitude as their own peculiar property. I had sat alone in my room on many, many anniversaries of this great holiday, and had never regarded it but as one of universal assemblage and rejoicing. I had excepted, and with an aching heart, a crowd of prisoners and beggars, but these were not the men for whom the tavern doors were open. Had they any customers, or was it a mere form? A form, no doubt.

Trying to feel quite sure of this I walked away, but before I had gone many paces, I stopped and looked back. There was a provoking air of business in the lamp above the door, which I could not overcome. I began to be afraid there might be many customers—young men perhaps struggling with the world, utter strangers in this great place, whose friends lived at a long distance off, and whose means were too slender to enable them to make the journey. The supposition gave rise to so many distressing little pictures, that, in preference to carrying them home with me, I determined to encounter the realities. So I turned and walked in.

I was at once glad and sorry to find that there was only one person in the dining-room; glad to know there were not more, and sorry to think he should be there by himself. He did not look so old as I, but like me, he was advanced in life, and his hair was nearly white. Though I made more noise in entering and seating myself than was quite necessary, with the view of attracting his attention, and saluting him in the good old form of that time of year, he did not raise his head, but sat with it resting on his hand, musing over his half-finished meal.

I called for something which would give me an excuse for remaining in the room, (I had dined early, as my housekeeper was engaged at night to partake of some friend's good cheer,) and sat where I could observe without intruding on him. After a time he looked up. He was aware that somebody had entered, but could see very little of me as I sat in the shade and he in the light. He was sad and thoughtful, and I forbore to trouble him by speaking.

Let me believe that it was something better than curiosity which riveted my attention and impelled me strongly towards this gentleman. I never saw so patient and kind a face. He should have been surrounded by friends, and yet here he sat dejected and alone, when all men had their friends about them. As often as he roused himself from his reverie, he would fall into it again, and it was plain that whatever were the subjects of his thoughts, they were of a melancholy kind, and would not be controlled.

He was not used to solitude. I was sure of that, for I know by myself that if he had been, his manner would have been different, and he would have taken some slight interest in the arrival of another. I could not fail to mark that he had no appetite—that he tried to eat in vain—that time after time the plate was pushed away, and he relapsed into his former posture.

His mind was wandering among old Christmas-days, I thought. Many of them sprung up together, not with a long gap between each, but in unbroken succession, like days of the week. It was a great change to find himself for the first time (I quite settled that it was the first) in an empty, silent room, with no soul to care for. I could not help following him in imagination through crowds of pleasant faces, and then coming back to that



dull place with its bough of mistletoe sickening in the gas, and sprigs of holly parched up already by a simoon of roast and boiled. The very waiter had gone home, and his representative, a poor, lean, hungry man, was keeping Christmas in his jacket.

I grew still more interested in my friend. His dinner done, a decanter of wine was placed before him. It remained untouched for a long time, but at length with a quivering hand he filled a glass and raised it to his lips. Some tender wish to which he had been accustomed to give utterance on that day, or some beloved name that he had been used to pledge, trembled upon them at the moment. He put it down very hastily—took it up once more—again put it down—pressed his hand upon his face—yes—and tears stole down his cheeks, I am certain.

Without pausing to consider whether I did right or wrong, I stepped across the room, and sitting down beside him, laid my hand gently on his arm.

"My friend," I said, "forgive me if I beseech you to take comfort and consolation from the lips of an old man. I will not preach to you what I have not practised, indeed. Whatever be your grief, be of a good heart—be of a good heart—be of a good heart, pray!"

"I see that you speak earnestly," he replied, "and kindly I am very sure, but—"

I nodded my head to show that I understood what he would say, for I had already gathered from a certain fixed expression in his face, and from the attention with which he watched me while I spoke, that his sense of hearing was destroyed. "There should be a free-masonry between us," said I, pointing from himself to me to explain my meaning—"if not in our gray hairs, at least in our misfortunes. You see that I am but a poor cripple."

I never felt so happy under my affliction, since the trying moment of my first becoming conscious of it, as when he took my hand in his with a smile that has lighted my path in life from that day, and we sat down side by side.

This was the beginning of my friendship with the deaf gentleman, and when was ever the slight and easy service of a kind word in season repaid by such attachment and devotion as he has shown to me!

He produced a little set of tablets and a pencil to facilitate our conversation, on that our first acquaintance, and I well remember how awkward and constrained I was in writing down my share of the dialogue, and how easily he guessed my meaning before I had written half of what I had to say. He told me in a faltering voice that he had not been accustomed to be alone on that day—that it had always been a little festival with him—and seeing that I glanced at his dress in the expectation that he wore mourning, he added hastily, that it was not that; if it had been, he thought he could have borne it better. From that time to the present, we have never touched upon this theme. Upon every return of the same day we have been together, and although we make it our annual custom to drink to each other hand in hand after dinner, and to recall with affectionate garrulity every circumstance of our first meeting, we always avoid this one as if by mutual consent.

Meantime we have gone on strengthening in our friendship and regard, and forming an attachment which, I trust and believe, will only be interrupted by death, to be renewed in another existence. I scarcely know how we communicate as we do, but he has long since ceased to be deaf to me. He is frequently the companion of my walks, and even in crowded streets replies to my

slightest look or gesture, as though he could read my thoughts. From the vast number of objects which pass in rapid succession before our eyes, we frequently select the same for some particular notice or remark, and when one of these little coincidences occurs, I cannot describe the pleasure that animates my friend, or the beaming countenance he will preserve for half an hour afterwards at least.

He is a great thinker from living so much within himself, and having a lively imagination, has a facility of conceiving and enlarging upon odd ideas, which renders him invaluable to our little body, and greatly astonishes our two friends. His powers in this respect are much assisted by a large pipe, which he assures us once belonged to a German student. Be this as it may, it has undoubtedly a very ancient and mysterious appearance, and is of such capacity that it takes three hours and a half to smoke it out. I have reason to believe that my barber, who is the chief authority of a knot of gossip who congregate every evening at a small tobacconist's hard by, has related anecdotes of this pipe and the grim figures that are carved upon its bowl, at which all the smokers in the neighbourhood have stood aghast, and I know that my housekeeper, while she holds it in high veneration, has a superstitious feeling connected with it, which would render her exceedingly unwilling to be left alone in its company after dark.

Whatever sorrow my deaf friend has known, and whatever grief may linger in some secret corner of his heart, he is now a cheerful, placid, happy creature. Misfortune can never have fallen upon such a man but for some good purpose, and when I see its traces in his gentle nature, and his earnest feeling, I am the less disposed to murmur at such trials as I may have undergone myself. With regard to the pipe, I have a theory of my own; I cannot help thinking that it is in some manner connected with the event that brought us together, for I remember that it was a long time before he even talked about it; that when he did, he grew reserved and melancholy; and that it was a long time yet before he brought it forth. I have no curiosity, however, on this subject, for I know that it promotes his tranquillity and comfort, and I need no other inducement to regard it with my utmost fervour.

Such is the deaf gentleman. I can call up his figure now, clad in sober gray, and seated in the chimney corner. As he puffs out the smoke from his favourite pipe, he casts a look on me brimful of cordiality and friendship, and says all manner of kind and genial things in a cheerful smile; then he raises his eyes to my clock, which is just about to strike, and glancing from it to me and back again, seems to divide his heart between us. For myself, it is not too much to say that I would gladly part with one of my poor limbs, could he but hear the old clock's voice.

Of our two friends, the first has been all his life one of that easy, wayward, truant class whom the world is accustomed to designate as nobody's enemies but their own. Bred to a profession for which he never qualified himself, and reared in the expectation of a fortune he has never inherited, he has undergone every vicissitude of which such an existence is capable. He and his younger brother, both orphans from their childhood, were educated by a wealthy relative, who taught them to expect an equal division of his property: but too indolent to court, and too honest to flatter, the elder gradually lost ground in the affections of a capricious old man, and the younger, who did not fail to improve his opportunity,

now triumphs in the possession of enormous wealth.—His triumph is to hoard it in solitary wretchedness, and probably to feel with the expenditure of every shilling, a greater pang than the loss of his whole inheritance ever cost his brother.

Jack Redburn—he was Jack Redburn at the first little school he went to, where every other child was mastered and surnamed, and he has been Jack Redburn all his life, or he would perhaps have been a richer man by this time—has been an inmate of my house these eight years past. He is my librarian, secretary, steward, and first minister: director of all my affairs, and inspector general of my household. He is something of a musician, something of an author, something of an actor, something of a painter, very much of a carpenter, and an extraordinary gardener: having had all his life a wonderful aptitude for learning every thing that is of no use to him. He is remarkably fond of children, and is the best and kindest nurse in sickness that ever drew the breath of life. He has mixed with every grade of society, and known the utmost distress, but there never was a less selfish, a more tender-hearted, a more enthusiastic, or a more guileless man, and I dare say, if few have done less good, fewer still have done less harm in the world than he. By what chance Nature forms such whimsical jumbles, I don't know; but I do know that she sends them among us very often, and that the king of the whole race is Jack Redburn.

I should be puzzled to say how old he is. His health is none of the best, and he wears a quantity of iron-gray hair, which shades his face and gives it rather a worn appearance; but we consider him quite a young fellow notwithstanding; and if a youthful spirit surviving the roughest contact with the world, confers upon its possessor any title to be considered young, then he is a mere child. The only interruptions to his careless cheerfulness, are on a wet Sunday, when he is apt to be unusually religious and solemn, and sometimes of an evening, when he has been blowing a very slow tune on the flute. On these last named occasions, he is apt to incline towards the mysterious or the terrible. As a specimen of his powers in this mood, I refer my readers to the extract from the clock-case which follows this paper; he brought it to me not long ago at midnight, and informed me that the main incident had been suggested by a dream of the night before.

His apartments are two cheerful rooms, looking towards the garden, and one of his great delights is to arrange and re-arrange the furniture in these chambers, and put it in every possible variety of position. During the whole time he has been here, I do not think he has slept for two nights running with the head of his bed in the same place, and every time he moves it, it is to be the last. My housekeeper was at first well nigh distracted with these frequent changes; but she has become quite reconciled to them by degrees, and has so fallen in with his humour, that they often consult together with great gravity on the final alteration. Whatever his arrangements are, however, they are always a pattern of neatness, and every one of the manifold articles connected with his manifold occupations, is to be found in its own particular place. Until within the last two or three years, he was subject to an occasional fit, (which usually came upon him in very fine weather,) under the influence of which he would dress himself with peculiar care, and going out, under pretence of taking a walk, disappear for several days together. At length, after the interval between each outbreak of this disorder had gradually grown

longer and longer, it wholly disappeared, and now he seldom stirs abroad except to stroll out a little way on a summer's evening. Whether he yet mistrusts his own constancy in this respect, and is therefore afraid to wear a coat, I know not, but we seldom see him in any other upper garments than an old spectral-looking dressing gown, with very disproportionate pockets, full of a miscellaneous collection of odd matters, which he picks up wherever he can lay his hands on them.

Every thing that is a favourite with our friend is a favourite with us, and thus it happens that the fourth among us is Mr. Owen Miles, a most worthy gentleman, who had treated Jack with great kindness before my deaf friend and I encountered him by an accident to which I may refer on some future occasion. Mr. Miles was once a very rich merchant, but receiving a severe shock in the death of his wife, he retired from business, and devoted himself to a quiet, unostentatious life. He is an excellent man, of thoroughly sterling character: not of quick apprehension, and not without some amusing prejudices, which I shall leave to their own development. He holds us all in profound veneration, but Jack Redburn he esteems as a kind of pleasant wonder, that he may venture to approach familiarly. He believes, not only that no man ever lived who could do so many things as Jack, but that no man ever lived who could do any thing so well, and he never calls my attention to any of his ingenious proceedings but he whispers in my ear, nudging me at the same time with his elbow—"If he had only made it his trade, sir—if he had only made it his trade!"

They are inseparable companions; one would suppose that, although Mr. Miles never by any chance does any thing in the way of assistance, Jack could do nothing without him. Whether he is reading, writing, painting, carpentering, gardening, flute-playing, or what not, there is Mr. Miles beside him, buttoned up to the chin in his blue coat, and looking on with a face of incredulous delight, as though he could not credit the testimony of his own senses, and had a misgiving that no man could be so clever but in a dream.

These are my friends; I have now introduced myself and them.

### THE CLOCK-CASE.

A CONFESSION FOUND IN A PRISON IN THE TIME OF CHARLES THE SECOND.

I held a lieutenant's commission in his majesty's army, and served abroad in the campaigns of 1677 and 1678. The treaty of Nimeguen being concluded, I returned home, and retiring from the service, withdrew to a small estate lying a few miles east of London, which I had recently acquired in right of my wife.

This is the last night I have to live, and I will set down the naked truth without disguise. I was never a brave man, and had always been from my childhood of a secret, sullen, distrustful nature. I speak of myself as if I had passed from the world, for while I write this my grave is digging and my name is written in the black book of death.

Soon after my return to England, my only brother was seized with mortal illness.

This circumstance gave me slight or no pain, for since we had been men we had associated but very little together. He was open-hearted and generous, handsomer than I, more accomplished, and generally beloved. Those

who sought my acquaintance abroad or at home, because they were friends of his, seldom attached themselves long to me, and would usually say in our first conversation that they were surprised to find two brothers so unlike in their manners and appearance. It was my habit to lead them on to this avowal, for I knew what comparisons they must draw between us, and, having a rankling envy in my heart, I sought to justify it to myself.

We had married two sisters. This additional tie between us, as it may appear to some, only estranged us more. His wife knew me well. I never struggled with any secret jealousy or gall when she was present, but that woman knew it as well as I did. I never raised my eyes at such times but I found hers fixed upon me; I never bent them to the ground or looked another way, but I felt that she overlooked me always. It was an inexpressible relief to me when we quarreled, and a greater relief still when I heard abroad that she was dead. It seems to me now as if some strange and terrible foreshadowing of what has happened since, must have hung over us then. I was afraid of her, she haunted me, her fixed and steady look comes back upon me now like the memory of a dark dream, and makes my blood run cold.

She died shortly after giving birth to a child—a boy. When my brother knew that all hope of his own recovery was past, he called my wife to his bedside, and confided this orphan, a child of four years old, to her protection. He bequeathed to him all the property he had, and willed that in case of the child's death it should pass to my wife, as the only acknowledgment he could make her for her care and love. He exchanged a few brotherly words with me, deploring our long separation, and being exhausted, fell into a slumber from which he never awoke.

We had no children, and as there had been a strong affection between the sisters, and my wife had almost supplied the place of a mother to this boy, she loved him as if he had been her own. The child was ardently attached to her; but he was his mother's image in face and spirit, and always mistrusted me.

I can hardly fix the date when the feeling first came upon me, but I soon began to be uneasy when this child was by. I never roused myself from some moody train of thought, but I marked him looking at me; not with mere childish wonder, but with something of the purpose and meaning that I had so often noted in his mother. It was no effort of my fancy, founded on close resemblances of feature and expression. I never could look the boy down. He feared me, but seemed by some instinct to despise me, while he did so; and even when he drew back beneath my gaze—as he would when we were alone, to get nearer to the door—he would keep his bright eyes upon me still.

Perhaps I hide the truth from myself, but I do not think that, when this began, I meditated to do him any wrong. I may have thought how serviceable his inheritance would be to us, and may have wished him dead, but I believe I had no thought of compassing his death. Neither did the idea come upon me at once, but by very slow degrees, presenting itself at first in dim shapes at a very great distance, as men may think of an earthquake or the last day—then drawing nearer and nearer, and losing something of its horror and improbability—then coming to be part and parcel, nay nearly the whole sum and substance of my daily thoughts, and resolving itself into a question of means and safety; not of doing or abstaining from the deed.

While this was going on within me, I never could

bear that the child should see me looking at him, and yet I was under a fascination which made it a kind of business with me to contemplate his slight and fragile figure, and think how easily it might be done. Sometimes I would steal up stairs and watch him as he slept, but usually I hovered in the garden near the window of the room in which he learnt his little tasks, and there as he sat upon a low seat beside my wife, I would peer at him for hours together from behind a tree; starting like the guilty wretch I was at every rustling of a leaf, and still gliding back to look and start again.

Hard by our cottage, but quite out of sight, and (if there were any wind astir) of hearing too, was a deep sheet of water. I spent days in shaping with my pocket-knife, a rough model of a boat, which I finished at last and dropped in the child's way. Then I withdrew to a secret place which he must pass if he stole away alone to swim this bauble, and lurked there for his coming. He came neither that day nor the next, though I waited from noon till nightfall. I was sure that I had him in my net, for I had heard him prattling of the toy, and knew that in his infant pleasure he kept it by his side in bed. I felt no weariness or fatigue, but waited patiently, and on the third day he passed me, running joyously along with his silken hair streaming in the wind, and he singing—God have mercy upon me—singing a merry ballad, who could hardly lip the words.

I stole down after him, creeping under certain shrubs which grow in that place, and none but devils know with what terror I, a strong, full grown man, tracked the footsteps of that baby as he approached the water's brink. I was close upon him, had sunk upon my knee and raised my hand to thrust him in, when he saw my shadow in the stream and turned him round.

His mother's ghost was looking from his eyes. The sun burst forth from behind a cloud: it shone in the bright sky, the glistening earth, the clear water, the sparkling drops of rain upon the leaves. There were eyes in every thing. The whole great universe of light was there to see the murder done. I know not what he said; he came of bold and manly blood, and child as he was, he did not crouch or fawn upon me. I heard him cry that he would try to love me—not that he did—and then I saw him running back towards the house. The next I saw was my own sword naked in my hand, and he lying at my feet stark dead; dabbed here and there with blood, but otherwise no different from what I had seen him in his sleep—in the same attitude too, with his cheek resting upon his little hand.

I took him in my arms and laid him—very gently now that he was dead—in a thicket. My wife was from home that day, and would not return until the next. Our bed-room window, the only sleeping room on that side of the house, was but a few feet from the ground, and I resolved to descend from it at night, and bury him in the garden. I had no thought that I had failed in my design, no thought that the water would be dragged and nothing found, that the money must now lay waste, since I must encourage the idea that the child was lost or stolen. All my thoughts were bound up and knotted together in the one absorbing necessity of hiding what I had done.

How I felt when they came to tell me that the child was missing, when I ordered scouts in all directions, when I gasped and trembled at every one's approach, no tongue can tell or mind of man conceive. I buried him that night. When I parted the boughs, and looked into the dark thicket, there was a glow-worm shining like the visible spirit of God upon the murdered child. I glanced

down into his grave when I placed him there, and still it gleamed upon his breast: an eye of fire looking up to Heaven in supplication to the stars that watched me at my work.

I had to meet my wife, and break the news, and give her hope that the child would soon be found. All this I did—with some appearance, I suppose, of being sincere, for I was the object of no suspicion. This done I sat at the bed-room window all day long, and watched the spot where the dreadful secret lay.

It was in a piece of ground which had been dug up to be newly turfed, and which I had chosen on that account, as the traces of my spade were less likely to attract attention. The men who laid down the grass must have thought me mad. I called to them continually to expedite their work, ran out and worked beside them, trod the turf with my feet, and hurried them with frantic eagerness. They had finished their task before night, and then I thought myself comparatively safe.

I slept—not as men do who wake refreshed and cheerful, but I did sleep, passing from vague and shadowy dreams of being hunted down, to visions of the plot of grass, through which now a hand and now a foot and now the head itself was starting out. At this point I always woke and stole to the window to make sure that it was not really so. That done, I crept to bed again, and thus I spent the night in fits and starts, getting up and lying down full twenty times, and dreaming the same dream over and over again—which was far worse than lying awake, for every dream had a whole night's suffering of its own. Once I thought that the child was alive, and that I had never tried to kill him. To wake from that dream was the most dreadful agony of all.

The next day I sat at the window again, never once taking my eyes from the place, which, although it was covered by the grass, was as plain to me—its shape, its size, its depth, its jagged sides, and all—as if it had been open to the light of day. When a servant walked across it, I felt as if he must sink in; when he had passed, I looked to see that his feet had not worn the edges. If a bird alighted there, I was in terror lest by some tremendous interposition it should be instrumental in the discovery; if a breath of air sighed across it, to me it whispered murder. There was not a sight or sound, how ordinary, mean, or unimportant soever, but was fraught with fear. And in this state of ceaseless watching I spent three days.

On the fourth, there came to the gate one who had served with me abroad, accompanied by a brother officer of his whom I had never seen. I felt that I could not bear to be out of sight of the place. It was a summer evening, and I bade my people take a table and a flask of wine into the garden. There I sat down with my chair upon the grave, and being assured that nobody could disturb it now, without my knowledge, tried to drink and talk.

"They hoped that my wife was well—that she was not obliged to keep her chamber—that they had not frightened her away. What could I do but tell them with a faltering tongue about the child? The officer whom I did not know was a down-looking man, and kept his eyes upon the ground while I was speaking. Even that terrified me! I could not divest myself of the idea that he saw something there which caused him to suspect the truth. I asked hurriedly if he supposed that—and stopped. "That the child has been murdered!" said he, looking mildly at me. "Oh, no! what could a man gain by murdering a poor child?" I could have told him

what a man gained by such a deed, no one better, but I held my peace, and shivered as with an ague.

Mistaking my emotion, they were endeavouring to cheer me with the hope that the boy would certainly be found—great cheer that was for me—when we heard a low, deep howl, and presently there sprang over the wall two great dogs, who, bounding into the garden, repeated the baying sound we had heard before.

"Blood-hounds!" cried my visitors.

What need to tell me that! I had never seen one of that kind in all my life, but I knew what they were, and for what purpose they had come. I grasped the elbows of my chair, and neither spoke nor moved.

"They are of the genuine breed," said the man whom I had known abroad, "and being out for exercise have no doubt escaped from their keeper. What noble animals they are!"

But he and his friend turned to look at the dogs, who, with their noses to the ground, moved restlessly about, running to and fro, and up and down, and across, and round in circles, careering about like wild things, and all this time taking no notice of us, but ever and again lifting their heads and repeating the yell we had heard already, then dropping their noses to the ground again, and tracking earnestly here and there. They now began to snuff the earth more eagerly than they had done yet, and although they were still very restless, no longer beat about in such wide circuits, but kept near to one spot, and constantly diminished the distance between themselves and me.

At last they came up close to the great chair on which I sat, and raising their frightful howl once more, tried to tear away the wooden rails that kept them from the ground beneath. I saw how I looked in the faces of the two who were with me.

"They scent some prey," said they, both together.

"They scent no prey!" cried I.

"In Heaven's name, move," said the one I knew, very earnestly, "or you will be torn to pieces."

"Let them tear me limb from limb, I'll never leave this place!" cried I. "Are dogs to hurry men to shameful death? Hew them down, cut them in pieces."

"There is some foul mystery here!" said the officer whom I did not know, drawing his sword. "In King Charles's name, assist me to secure this man."

They both set upon me, and forced me away, though I fought, and bit, and caught at them like a madman. After a struggle they got me quietly between them, and then, my God! I saw the angry dogs tearing at the earth, and throwing it up into the air like water.

What more have I to tell! That I fell upon my knees, and with chattering teeth confessed the truth, and prayed to be forgiven. That I have since denied and now confess to it again. That I have been tried for the crime, found guilty, and sentenced. That I have not the courage to anticipate my doom, or to bear up manfully against it. That I have no compassion, no consolation, no hope, no friend. That my wife has happily lost for the time those faculties which would enable her to know my misery or hers. That I am alone in this stone dungeon with my evil spirit, and that I die to-morrow!

#### PERSONAL ADVENTURES OF MASTER HUMPHREY.

THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

Night is generally my time for walking. In the summer I often leave home early in the morning, and roam



about fields and lanes all day, or even escape for days or weeks together, but saving in the country I seldom go out until after dark; though heaven be thanked, I love its light, and feel the cheerfulness it sheds upon the earth, as much as any creature living.

I have fallen insensibly into this habit, both because it favours my infirmity, and because it affords me greater opportunity of speculating on the characters and occupations of those who fill the streets. The glare and hurry of broad noon are not adapted to idle pursuits like mine; a glimpse of passing faces caught by the light of a street lamp or shop window, is often better for my purpose than their full revelation in the day-light; and, if I must add the truth, night is kinder in this respect than day, which too often destroys an air-built castle at the moment of its completion, without the smallest ceremony or remorse.

That constant pacing to and fro, that never-ending restlessness, that incessant tread of feet wearing the rough stones smooth and glossy—is it not a wonder how the dwellers in narrow ways can bear to hear it? Think of a sick man in such a place as Saint Martin's court, listening to the footsteps, and in the midst of pain and weariness obliged, despite himself, (as though it were a task he must perform,) to detect the child's step from the man's, the slipshod beggar from the booted exquisite, the lounging from the busy, the dull heel of sauntering outcast from the quick tread of an expectant pleasure-seeker—think of the hum and noise being always present to his senses, and of the stream of life that will not stop, pouring on, on, on, through all his restless dreams, as if he were condemned to lie dead, but conscious, in a noisy churchyard, and had no hope of rest for centuries to come.

Then the crowds for ever passing and repassing on the bridges (or those which are free of toll at least) where many stop on fine evenings looking listlessly down upon the water, with some vague idea that by and by it runs between green banks which grow wider and wider, until at last it joins the broad vast sea—where some halt to rest from heavy loads, and think as they look over the parapet, that to smoke and lounge away one's life, and lie sleeping in the sun upon a hot tarpaulin, in a dull, slow, sluggish barge, must be happiness unalloyed, and where some, and a very different class, pause with heavier loads than they, remembering to have heard or read in some old time that drowning was not a hard death, but of all means of suicide the easiest and best.

Covent Garden market at sunrise too, in the spring or summer, when the fragrance of sweet flowers in the air, overpowering even the unwholesome steam of last night's debauchery, and driving the dusky thrush, whose cage has hung outside a garret window all night long, half mad with joy! Poor bird! the only neighbouring thing at all akin to the other little captives, some of whom, shrieking from the hot hands of drunken purchasers, lie drooping on the path already, while others, sodden by close contact, await the time when they shall be watered and freshened up to please more sober company, and make old clerks, who pass them on their road to business, wonder what has filled their breasts with visions of the country.

But my present purpose is not to expatiate upon my walks, for I have an adventure to relate; it arose out of one of these rambles, and thus I have been led to speak of them by way of preface.

One night I had roamed into the city, and was walk-

ing slowly on in my usual way, musing upon a great many things, when I was arrested by an inquiry, the purport of which did not reach me, but which seemed to be addressed to myself, and was preferred in a soft, sweet voice, that struck me very pleasantly. I turned hastily round, and found at my elbow a pretty little girl, who begged to be directed to a certain street a considerable distance, and indeed in quite another quarter of the town.

"It is a very long way from here," said I, "my child."

"I know that, sir," she replied timidly. "I am afraid it is a very long way, for I came from there to-night."

"Alone!" said I, in some surprise.

"Oh yes, I don't mind that; but I am a little frightened now, for I have lost my road."

"And what made you ask it of me? Suppose I should tell you wrong?"

"I am sure you will not do that," said the little creature; "you are such a very old gentleman, and walk so slow yourself."

I cannot describe how much I was impressed by this appeal and the energy with which it was made, which brought a tear into the child's clear eye, and made her slight figure tremble as she looked up into my face.

"Come," said I, "I'll take you there."

She put her hand in mine as confidently as if she had known me from her cradle, and we trudged away together, the little creature accommodating her pace to mine, and rather seeming to lead and take care of me than I to be protecting her. I observed that every now and then she stole a curious look at my face, as if to make quite sure that I was not deceiving her, and that these glances (very sharp and keen they were too) seemed to increase her confidence at every repetition.

For my part, my curiosity and interest were at least equal to the child's, for child she certainly was, although I thought it probable, from what I could make out, that her very small and delicate frame imparted a peculiar youthfulness to her appearance. Though more scantily attired than she might have been, she was dressed with perfect neatness, and betrayed no marks of poverty or neglect.

"Who has sent you so far by yourself?" said I.

"Somebody who is very kind to me, sir."

"And what have you been doing?"

"That I must not tell," said the child, firmly.

There was something in the manner of this reply which caused me to look at the little creature with an involuntary expression of surprise; for I wondered what kind of errand it might be that occasioned her to be prepared for questioning. Her quick eye seemed to read my thoughts, for as it met mine, she added that there was no harm in what she had been doing, but it was a great secret—a secret which she did not even know herself.

This was said with no appearance of cunning or deceit, but with an unsuspicious frankness that bore the impress of truth. She walked on as before, growing more familiar with me as we proceeded, and talking cheerfully by the way; but she said no more about her home, beyond remarking that we were going quite a new road, and asking if it were a short one.

While we were thus engaged, I revolved in my mind a hundred different explanations of the riddle, and rejected them every one. I really felt ashamed to take advantage of the ingenuousness or grateful feeling of the child for the purpose of gratifying my curiosity. I love these little people; and it is not a slight thing when they,

who are so fresh from God, love us. As I had felt pleased at first by her confidence, I determined to deserve it, and to do credit to the nature which had prompted her to repose it in me.

There was no reason, however, why I should refrain from seeing the person who had inconsiderately sent her to so great a distance by night and alone; and as it was not improbable that if she found herself near home, she might take farewell of me and deprive me of the opportunity, I avoided the most frequent ways, and took the most intricate; and thus it was not until we arrived in the street itself, that she knew where we were. Clapping her hands with pleasure, and running on before me for a short distance, my little acquaintance stopped at a door, and remaining on the step till I came up, knocked at it when I joined her.

A part of this door was glass, unprotected by any shutter, which I did not observe at first, for all was very dark and silent within, and I was anxious (as indeed the child was also) for an answer to our summons. When she had knocked twice or thrice, there was a noise as if some person were moving inside, and at length a faint light appeared through the glass, which, as it approached very slowly, the bearer having to make his way through a great many scattered articles, enabled me to see both what kind of person it was who advanced, and what kind of place it was through which he came.

It was a little old man, with long gray hair, whose face and figure, as he held the light above his head and looked before him as he approached, I could plainly see. Though much altered by age, I fancied I could recognise in his spare and slender form something of that delicate mould which I had noticed in the child. Their bright blue eyes were certainly alike; but his face was so deeply furrowed and so very full of care, that here all resemblance ceased.

The place through which he made his way at leisure, was one of those receptacles for old and curious things which seem to crouch in odd corners of this town, and to hide their musty treasures from the public eye in jealousy and distrust. There were suits of mail standing like ghosts in armour here and there, fantastic carvings brought from monkish cloisters, rusty weapons of various kinds, distorted figures in china and wood, and iron and ivory; tapestry and strange furniture that might have been designed in dreams. The haggard aspect of the little old man was wonderfully suited to the place; he might have groped among old churches and tombs and deserted houses, and gathered all the spoils with his own hands. There was nothing in the whole collection but what was in keeping with himself; nothing that looked older or more worn than he.

As he turned the key in the lock, he surveyed me with some astonishment, which was not diminished when he looked from me to my companion. The door being opened, the child addressed him as grandfather, and told him the little story of our companionship.

"Why bless the child," said the old man patting her on the head, "how couldst thou miss thy way—what if I had lost thee, Nell!"

"I would have found my way back to you, grandfather," said the child boldly; "never fear."

The old man kissed her, and then turning to me and begging me to walk in, I did so. The door was closed and locked. Preceding me with the light, he led me through the place I had already seen from without, into a small sitting room behind, in which was another door opening into a kind of closet, where I saw a little bed

that a fairy might have slept in, it looked so very small and was so prettily arranged. The child took a candle and tripped into this little room, leaving the old man and me together.

"You must be tired, sir," said he, as he placed a chair near the fire, "how can I thank you?"

"By taking more care of your grandchild another time, my good friend," I replied.

"More care!" said the old man in a shrill voice, "more care of Nelly! why who ever loved a child as I love Nelly!"

He said this with such evident surprise that I was perplexed what answer to make, and the more so because coupled with something feeble and wandering in his manner, there were in his face marks of deep and anxious thought, which convinced me that he could not be, as I had at first been inclined to suppose, in a state of dotage or imbecility.

"I don't think you consider"—I began.

"I don't consider!" cried the old man, interrupting me, "I don't consider her! ah, how little you know of the truth! Little Nelly, little Nelly!"

It would be impossible for any man, I care not what his form of speech might be, to express more affection than the dealer in curiosities did, in these four words. I waited for him to speak again, but he rested his chin upon his hand, and shaking his head twice or thrice, fixed his eyes upon the fire.

While we were sitting thus in silence, the door of the closet opened, and the child returned, her light brown hair hanging loose about her neck, and her face flushed with the haste she had made to rejoin us. She busied herself immediately in preparing supper, and while she was thus engaged I remarked that the old man took an opportunity of observing me more closely than he had done yet. I was surprised to see that all this time every thing was done by the child, and that there appeared to be no other persons but ourselves in the house. I took advantage of a moment when she was absent to venture a hint on this point, to which the old man replied that there were few grown persons as trustworthy or as careful as she.

"It always grieves me," I observed, roused by what I took to be his selfishness, "it always grieves me to contemplate the initiation of children into the ways of life, when they are scarcely more than infants. It checks their confidence and simplicity—two of the best qualities that heaven gives them—and demands that they share our sorrows before they are capable of entering into our enjoyments."

"It will never check hers," said the old man, looking steadily at me, "the springs are too deep. Besides, the children of the poor know but few pleasures. Even the cheap delights of childhood must be bought and paid for."

"But—forgive me for saying this—you are surely not so very poor"—said I.

"She is not my child, sir," returned the old man.

"Her mother was, and she was poor. I save nothing—not a penny—though I live as you see, but"—he laid his hand upon my arm and leant forward to whisper, "She shall be rich one of these days, and a fine lady. Don't you think ill of me because I use her help. She gives it cheerfully as you see, and it would break her heart if she knew that I suffered any body else to do for me what her little hands could undertake. I don't consider!"—he cried with sudden querulousness, "why, God knows that

this one child is the thought and object of my life, and yet he never prospers me—no, never."

At this juncture, the subject of our conversation again returned, and the old man motioning me to approach the table, broke off, and said no more.

We had scarcely begun our repast, when there was a knock at the door by which I had entered, and Nell bursting into a hearty laugh, which I was rejoiced to hear, for it was childlike and full of hilarity, said it was no doubt old Kit come back at last.

"Foolish Nell!" said the old man, fondling with her hair. "She always laughs at poor Kit."

The child laughed again more heartily than before, and I could not help smiling from pure sympathy. The little old man took up a candle and went to open the door. When he came back, Kit was at his heels.

Kit was a shock-headed, shambling, awkward lad, with an uncommonly wide mouth, very red cheeks, a turned-up nose, and certainly the most comical expression of face I ever saw. He stopped short at the door on seeing a stranger, twirled in his hand a perfectly round old hat without any vestige of a brim, and resting himself now on one leg and now on the other, and changing them constantly, stood in the door-way, looking into the parlour with the most extraordinary leer I ever beheld. I entertained a grateful feeling towards the boy from that minute, for I felt that he was the comedy of the child's life.

"A long way, wasn't it, Kit?" said the little old man.

"Why then, it was a goodish stretch, master," returned Kit.

"Did you find the house easily?"

"Why then, not over and above easy, master," said Kit.

"Of course you have come back hungry?"

"Why then, I do consider myself rather so, master," was the answer.

The lad had a remarkable way of standing sideways as he spoke, and thrusting his head forward over his shoulder, as if he could not get at his voice without that accompanying action. I think he would have amused one any where, but the child's exquisite enjoyment of his oddity, and the relief it was to find, that there was something she associated with merriment in a place that appeared so unsuited to her, were quite irresistible. It was a great point, too, that Kit himself was flattered by the sensation he created, and after several efforts to preserve his gravity, burst into a loud roar, and so stood with his mouth wide open and his eyes nearly shut, laughing violently.

The old man had again relapsed into his former abstraction, and took no notice of what passed, but I remarked that when her laugh was over, the child's bright eyes were dimmed with tears, called forth by the fulness of heart with which she welcomed her uncouth favourite after the little anxiety of the night. As for Kit himself (whose laugh had been all the time one of that sort which very little would change into a cry) he carried a large slice of bread and meat and a mug of beer into a corner, and applied himself to disposing of them with great voracity.

"Ah!" said the old man, turning to me with a sigh, as if I had spoken to him but that moment, "you don't know what you say when you tell me that I don't consider her."

"You must not attach too great a weight to a remark founded on first appearances, my friend," said I.

"No," returned the old man thoughtfully, "no, come hither, Nell."

The little girl hastened from her seat, and put her arm about his neck.

"Do I love thee, Nell?" said he, "Say—do I love thee, Nell, or no?"

The child only answered by her caresses, and laid her head upon his breast.

"Why dost thou sob?" said the grandfather, pressing her closer to him, and glancing towards me. "Is it because thou know'st I love thee, and dost not like that I should seem to doubt it by my question? Well, well—then let us say I love thee dearly."

"Indeed, indeed you do," replied the child with great earnestness, "Kit knows you do."

Kit, who in despatching his bread and meat had been swallowing two-thirds of his knife at every mouthful with the coolness of a juggler, stopped short in his operations on being thus appealed to, and bawled "Nobody isn't such a fool as to say he doesn't," after which he incapacitated himself for further conversation by taking a most prodigious sandwich at one bite.

"She is poor now," said the old man, patting the child's cheek, "but I say again, that the time is coming when she shall be rich. It has been a long time coming, but it must come at last; a very long time, but it surely must come. It has come to other men who do nothing but waste and riot. When *will* it come to me?"

"I am very happy as I am, grandfather," said the child.

"Tush, tush!" returned the old man, "thou dost not know—how should'st thou?" Then he muttered again between his teeth. "The time must come, I am very sure it must. It will be all the better for coming late!" and then he sighed and fell into his former musing state, and still holding the child between his knees, appeared to be insensible to every thing around him. By this time it wanted but a few minutes of midnight, and I rose to go, which recalled him to himself.

"One moment, sir," he said. "Now Kit—near midnight, boy, and you still here! Get home, get home, and be true to your time in the morning, for there's work to do. Good night! There, bid him good night, Nell, and let him be gone!"

"Good night, Kit," said the child, her eyes lighting up with merriment and kindness.

"Good night, Miss Nell," returned the boy.

"And thank this gentleman," interposed the old man, "but for whose care I might have lost my little girl to-night."

"No, no, my master," said Kit, "that won't do, that won't."

"What do you mean?" cried the old man.

"I'd have found her, master," said Kit, "I'd have found her, I'd bet that I'd find her if she was above ground, I would as quick as any body, master. Ha, ha, ha!"

Once more opening his mouth and shutting his eyes, and laughing like a Stentor, Kit gradually backed to the door, and roared himself out.

Free of the room, the boy was not slow in taking his departure; when he had gone, and the child was occupied in clearing the table, the old man said:

"I haven't seemed to thank you, sir, enough for what you have done to-night, but I do thank you humbly and heartily, and so does she, and her thanks are better worth than mine. I should be sorry that you went away, and thought I was unmindful of your goodness, or careless of her—I am not, indeed."

I was sure of that, I said, from what I had seen. "But," I added, "may I ask you a question?"

"Ay, sir," replied the old man, "what is it?"

"This delicate child," said I, "with so much beauty and intelligence—has she nobody to take care for her but you, has she no other companion or adviser?"

"No," he returned, looking steadfastly in my face, "no, and she wants no other."

"But are you not fearful," said I, "that you may misunderstand a charge so tender? I am sure you mean well, but are you quite certain that you know how to execute such a trust as this? I am an old man, like you, and am actuated by an old man's concern in all that is young and promising. Do you not think that what I have seen of you and this little creature to-night, must have an interest not wholly free from pain?"

"Sir," rejoined the old man after a moment's silence, "I have no right to feel hurt at what you say. It is true, that in many respects I am the child, and she the grown person—that you have seen already. But waking or sleeping, by night or day, in sickness or health, she is the one object of my care, and if you knew of how much care, you would look on me with different eyes, you would indeed. Ah! it's a weary life for an old man—a weary, weary life—but there is a great end to gain, and that I keep before me."

Seeing that he was in a state of excitement and impatience, I turned to put on an outer coat which I had thrown off on entering the room, purposing to say no more. I was surprised to see the child standing patiently by with a cloak upon her arm, and in her hand a hat and stick.

"Those are not mine, my dear," said I.

"No," returned the child, quietly, "they are grandfather's."

"But he is not going out to-night."

"Oh, yes he is," said the child, with a smile.

"And what becomes of you, my pretty one?"

"Me! I stay here, of course. I always do."

I looked in astonishment towards the old man, but he was, or feigned to be busy in the arrangement of his dress. From him I looked back to the slight, gentle figure of the child. Alone! In that gloomy place all the long, dreary night!

She evinced no consciousness of my surprise, but cheerfully helped the old man with his cloak, and when he was ready, took a candle to light us out. Finding that we did not follow as she expected, she looked back with a smile, and waited for us. The old man showed by his face that he plainly understood the cause of my hesitation, but he merely signed to me with an inclination of the head to pass out of the room before him, and remained silent. I had no resource but to comply.

When we reached the door, the child, setting down the candle, turned to say good night, and raised her face to kiss me. Then she ran to the old man, who folded her in his arms, and bade God bless her.

"Sleep soundly, Nell," he said in a low voice, "and angels guard thy bed. Do not forget thy prayers, my sweet."

"No, indeed," answered the child fervently, "they make me feel so happy!"

"That's well; I know they do; they should," said the old man. "Bless thee a hundred times. Early in the morning I shall be home."

"You'll not ring twice," returned the child. "The bell wakes me, even in the middle of a dream."

With this they separated. The child opened the door

(now guarded by a shutter which I had heard the boy put up before he left the house) and with another farewell, whose clear and tender note I have recalled a thousand times, held it until we had passed out. The old man paused a moment while it was gently closed and fastened on the inside, and satisfied that this was done, walked on at a slow pace. At the street corner he stopped, and regarding me with a troubled countenance, said that our ways were widely different, and that he must take his leave. I would have spoken, but summoning up more alacrity than might have been expected in one of his appearance, he hurried away. I could see that twice or thrice he looked back as if to ascertain if I were still watching him, or perhaps to assure himself that I was not following at a distance. The obscurity of the night favoured his disappearance, and his figure was soon beyond my sight.

I remained standing on the spot where he had left me, unwilling to depart, and yet unknowing why I should loiter there. I looked wistfully into the street we had lately quitted, and after a time directed my steps that way. I passed and repassed the house, and stopped and listened at the door; all was dark and silent as the grave.

Yet I lingered about, and could not tear myself away, thinking of all possible harm that might happen to the child—of fires, and robberies, and even murder—and feeling as if some evil must ensue if I turned my back upon the place. The closing of a door or window in the street, brought me before the curiosity-dealer's once more; I crossed the road and looked up at the house to assure myself that the noise had not come from there. No, it was black, cold and lifeless as before.

There were few passengers astir: the street was sad and dismal, and pretty well my own. A few stragglers from the theatres hurried by, and now and then I turned aside to avoid some noisy drunkard as he reeled homewards; but these interruptions were not frequent, and soon ceased. The clock struck one. Still I paced up and down, promising myself that every time should be the last, and breaking faith with myself on some new plea as often as I did so.

The more I thought of what the old man had said and of his looks and bearing, the less I could account, for what I had seen and heard. I had a strange misgiving that his nightly absence was for no good purpose. I had only come to know the fact through the innocence of the child, and though the old man was by at the time, and saw my undisguised surprise, he had preserved a strange mystery upon the subject, and offered no word of explanation. These reflections naturally recalled again more strongly than before his haggard face, his wandering manner, his restless, anxious looks. His affection for the child might not be inconsistent with villainy of the worst kind; even that very affection was in itself an extraordinary contradiction, or how could he leave her thus? Disposed as I was to think badly of him, I never doubted that his love for her was real. I could not admit the thought, remembering what had passed between us, and the tone of voice in which he had called her by her name.

"Stop here, of course," the child had said in answer to my question, "I always do!" What could take him from home by night, and every night? I called up all the strange tales I had ever heard of dark and secret deeds committed in great towns and escaping detection for a long series of years; wild as many of these stories were, I could not find one adapted to this mystery.



which only became the more impenetrable in proportion as I sought to solve it.

Occupied with such thoughts as these, and a crowd of others all tending to the same point, I continued to pace the street for two long hours; at length the rain began to descend heavily, and then overpowered by fatigue, though no less interested than I had been at first, I engaged in the nearest coach and so got home. A cheerful fire was blazing on the hearth, the lamp burnt brightly, my clock received me with its old familiar welcome; every thing was quiet, warm, and cheering, and in happy contrast to the gloom and darkness I had quitted.

But all that night, waking or in my sleep, the same thoughts recurred, and the same images retained possession of my brain. I had ever before me the old dark, murky rooms—the gaunt suits of mail with their ghostly silent air—the faces all awry, grinning from wood and stone—the dust and rust and worm that lives in wood—and alone in the midst of all this lumber and decay and ugly age, the beautiful child in her gentle slumber, smiling through her light and sunny dreams.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

Master Humphrey has been favoured with the following letter, written on strongly-scented paper, and sealed in light blue wax, with the representation of two very plump doves, interchanging beaks. It does not commence with any of the usual forms of address, but begins as is here set forth.

*Bath, Wednesday night.*

Heavens! into what an indiscretion do I suffer myself to be betrayed! To address these faltering lines to a total stranger, and that stranger one of a conflicting sex!—and yet I am precipitated into the abyss, and have no power of self-snatchation (forgive me if I coin that phrase) from the yawning gulf before me.

Yes, I am writing to a man, but let me not think of that, for madness is in the thought. You will understand my feelings! Oh, yes! I am sure you will, and respect them too, and not depise them—will you?

Let me be calm. That portrait—smiling as once he smiled on me—that cane, dangling as I have seen it dangle from his hand, I know not how oft—those legs that have glided through my nightly dreams and never stopped to speak—the perfectly gentlemanly though false original—can I be mistaken! oh, no, no.

Let me be calmer yet; I would be calm as coffins. You have published a letter from one whose likeness is engraved, but whose name (and wherefore?) is suppressed. Shall I breathe that name? Is it—but why ask when my heart tells me too truly that it is!

I would not upbraid him with his treachery, I would not remind him of those times when he plighted the most eloquent of vows, and procured from me a small pecuniary accommodation—and yet I would see him!—see him did I say—him—alas! such is woman's nature. For as the poet beautifully says—but you will already have anticipated the sentiment. Is it not sweet? oh, yes!

It was in this city (hallowed by the recollection) that I met him first, and assuredly if mortal happiness be recorded any where, then those rubbers with their three-and-sixpenny points are scored on tablets of celestial brass. He always held an honour—generally two. On that eventful night we stood at eight. He raised his

eyes (luminous in their seductive sweetness) to my agitated face. "Can you?" said he, with peculiar meaning—I felt the gentle pressure of his foot on mine, our corns throbbed in unison. "Can you?" he said again, and every lineament of his expressive countenance added the words, "resist me!" I murmured "No," and fainted.

They said when I recovered, it was the weather. I said it was the nutmeg in the negus. How little did they suspect the truth! How little did they guess the deep mysterious meaning of that inquiry! He called next morning on his knees—I do not mean to say that he actually came in that position to the house-door, but that he went down upon those joints directly after the servant retired. He brought some verses in his hat which he said were original, but which I have since found were Milton's. Likewise a little bottle labeled laudanum; also a pistol and a swordstick. He drew the latter, uncorked the former, and clicked the trigger of the pocket fire-arm. He had come, he said, to conquer or to die. He did not die. He wrested from me an avowal of my love, and let off the pistol out of a back window, previous to partaking of a slight repast.

Faithless, inconstant man! How many ages seem to have elapsed since his unaccountable and perfidious disappearance! Could I still forgive him both that and the borrowed lucre that he promised to pay next week! Could I spurn him from my feet if he approached in penitence, and with a matrimonial object! Would the blandishing enchanter still weave his spells around me, or should I burst them all and turn away in coldness! I dare not trust my weakness with the thought.

My brain is in a whirl again. You know his address, his occupations, his mode of life, are acquainted perhaps with his inmost thoughts. You are a humane and philanthropic character—reveal all you know—all; but especially the street and number of his lodgings. The post is departing, the bellman rings—pray Heaven it be not the knell of love and hope to

BELINDA.

P. S. Pardon the wanderings of a bad pen and a distracted mind. Address to the post-office.—The bellman rendered impatient by delay, is ringing dreadfully in the passage.

P. P. S. I open this to say that the bellman is gone, and that you must not expect it till the next post, so don't be surprised when you don't get it.

Master Humphrey does not feel himself at liberty to furnish his fair correspondent with the address of the gentleman in question, but he publishes her letter as a public appeal to his faith and gallantry.

## MASTER HUMPHREY'S VISITOR.

When I am in a thoughtful mood, I often succeed in diverting the current of some mournful reflections, by conjuring up a number of fanciful associations with the objects that surround me, and dwelling upon the scenes and characters they suggest.

I have been led by this habit to assign to every room in my house and every old staring portrait on its walls, a separate interest of its own. Thus, I am persuaded that a stately dame, terrible to behold in her rigid modesty, who hangs above the chimney-piece of my bed-room, is the former lady of the mansion. In the courtyard below is a stone face of surpassing ugliness, which I have some-

how—in a kind of jealousy, I am afraid—associated with her husband. Above my study, is a little room with ivy peeping through the lattice, from which I bring their daughter, a lovely girl of eighteen or nineteen years of age, and dutiful in all respects save one, that one being her devoted attachment to a young gentleman on the stairs, whose grandmother (degraded to a disused laundry in the garden) piques herself upon an old family quarrel, and is the implacable enemy of their love. With such materials as these, I work out many a little drama, whose chief merit is, that I can bring it to a happy end at will; I have so many of them on hand, that if on my return home one of these evenings, I were to find some bluff old wight of two centuries ago, comfortably seated in my easy chair, and a love-lorn damsel vainly appealing to his obdurate heart, and leaning her white arm upon my clock itself, I verily believe I should only express my surprise that they had kept me waiting so long, and never honoured me with a call before.

I was, in such a mood as this, sitting in my garden yesterday morning under the shade of a favourite tree, reveling in all the bloom and brightness about me, and feeling every sense of hope and enjoyment quenched by this most beautiful season of spring, when my meditations were interrupted by the unexpected appearance of my barber at the end of the walk, who I immediately saw was coming toward me with a hasty step that betokened something remarkable.

My barber is at all times a very brisk, bustling, active little man—for he is, as it were, chubby all over, without being stout or unwieldy—but yesterday his alacrity was so uncommon that it took me by surprise. Nor could I fail to observe, when he came up to me, that his gray eyes were twinkling in an extraordinary manner, that his little red nose was in an unusual glow, that every line in his round bright face was twisted and carved into an expression of pleased surprise, that his whole countenance was radiant with glee. I was still more surprised to see my house-keeper, who usually preserves a very staid air, and stands upon her dignity, peeping round the hedge at the bottom of the walk, and exchanging nods and smiles with the barber who twice or thrice looked over his shoulders for that purpose. I could conceive no announcement to which these appearances could be the prelude, unless it were that they had married each other that morning.

I was, consequently, a little disappointed when it only came out that there was a gentleman in the house who wished to speak to me.

"And who is it?" said I.

The barber with his face screwed up still tighter than before, replied that the gentleman would not send his name, but wished to see me. I pondered for a moment, wondering who this visitor might be, and I remarked that he embraced the opportunity of exchanging another nod with the house-keeper, who still lingered in the distance.

"Well!" said I, "bid the gentleman come here."

This seemed to be the consummation of the barber's hopes, for he turned sharp round, and actually ran away.

Now, my sight is not very good at a distance, and therefore when the gentleman first appeared in the walk, I was not quite clear whether he was a stranger to me or otherwise. He was an elderly gentleman, but came tripping along in the pleasantest manner conceivable, avoiding the garden-roller and the borders of the beds with inimitable dexterity, picking his way among the flower-

pots, and smiling with unspeakable good humour. Before he was half way up the walk he began to salute me; then I thought I knew him; but when he came towards me with his hat in his hand, the sun shining on his bald head, his bland face, his bright spectacles, his fawn-coloured tights and his black gaiters—then, my heart warmed towards him, and I felt quite certain that it was Mr. Pickwick.

"My dear sir," said that gentleman as I rose to receive him, "pray be seated. Pray sit down.—Now, do not stand on my account—I insist upon it, really." With these words Mr. Pickwick gently pressed me down into my seat, and taking my hand in his, shook it again and again with a welcome, something of that heartiness and pleasure which the sight of him awakened, and I made him sit down beside me. All this time he kept alternately relaxing my hand, and grasping it again, and surveying me through his spectacles with such a beaming countenance as I never beheld.

"You knew me directly!" said Mr. Pickwick.—  
"What a pleasure it is to think that you knew me directly!"

I remarked that I had read his adventures very often, and that his features were quite familiar to me from the published portraits. As I thought it a good opportunity of adverting to the circumstance, I consoled with him upon the various libels on his character which had found their way into print. Mr. Pickwick shook his head, and for a moment looked very indignant, but smiling again directly, added, that no doubt I was acquainted with Cervantes' introduction to the second part of *Don Quixote*, and that it fully expressed his sentiments on the subject.

"But now," said Mr. Pickwick, "don't you wonder how I found you out?"

"I will never wonder, and with your good leave, never know," said I, smiling in my turn. "It is enough for me that you give me this gratification. I have not the least desire that you should tell me by what means I have obtained it." "You are very kind," returned Mr. Pickwick, shaking me by the hand again, "you are so exactly what I expected! But for what particular purpose do you think I have sought you out, my dear sir? Now, what do you think I have come for?"

Mr. Pickwick put this question as though he were persuaded that it was morally impossible that I could by any means divine the deep purpose of his visit, and that it must be hidden from all human ken. Therefore, although I was rejoiced to think that I anticipated his drift, I feigned to be quite ignorant of it, and after a brief consideration shook my head despairingly.

"What should you say," said Mr. Pickwick, laying the fore-finger of his left hand upon my coat sleeve, and looking at me with his head thrown back, and a little on one side, "what should you say, if I confessed that after reading your account of yourself and your little society, I had come here, a humble candidate for one of those empty chairs?"

"I should say," I returned, "that I know of only one circumstance which could still further endear that little society to me, and that would be the associating with it my old friend—for you must let me call you so—my old friend, Mr. Pickwick."

As I made this answer, every feature of Mr. Pickwick's face fused itself into one all-pervading expression of delight. After shaking me heartily by both hands at once, he patted me gently on the back, and then—I well understood why—coloured up to the eyes, and

hoped with great earnestness of manner that he had not hurt me.

If he had, I would have been content that he should have repeated the offence a hundred times rather than suppose so; but as he had not, I had no difficulty in changing the subject by making an inquiry which had been upon my lips twenty times already.

"You have not told me," said I, "any thing about Sam Weller."

"Oh! Sam," replied Mr. Pickwick, "is the same as ever. The same true faithful fellow that he ever was. What should I tell you about Sam, my dear sir, except that he is more indispensable to my happiness and comfort every day of my life?"

"And Mr. Weller, senior?" said I.

"Old Mr. Weller," returned Mr. Pickwick, "is in no respect more altered than Sam, unless it be that he is a little more opinionated than he was formerly, and perhaps at times more talkative. He spends a good deal of his time now in our neighbourhood, and has so constituted himself a part of my body-guard, that when I ask permission for Sam to have a seat in your kitchen on clock nights (supposing your three friends think me worthy to fill one of the chairs) I am afraid I must often include Mr. Weller too."

I very readily pledged myself to give both Sam and his father a free admission to my house at all hours and seasons, and this point settled, we fell into a lengthy conversation, which was carried on with as little reserve on both sides as if we had been intimate friends from our youth, and which conveyed to me the comfortable assurance that Mr. Pickwick's buoyancy of spirit, and indeed all his old cheerful characteristics, were wholly unimpaired. As he had spoken of the consent of my friends as being yet in abeyance, I repeatedly assured him that his proposal was certain to receive their most joyful sanction, and several times entreated that he would give me leave to introduce him to Jack Redburn and Mr. Miles (who were near at hand) without further ceremony.

To this proposal, however, Mr. Pickwick's delicacy would by no means allow him to accede, for he urged that his eligibility must be formally discussed, and that until this had been done, he could not think of obtruding himself further. The utmost I could obtain from him was, a promise that he would attend upon our next night of meeting, that I might have the pleasure of presenting him immediately on his election.

Mr. Pickwick having with many blushes placed in my hands a small roll of paper, which he termed his "qualifications," put a great many questions to me touching my friends, and particularly Jack Redburn, whom he repeatedly termed "a fine fellow," and in whose favour I could see he was strongly predisposed. When I had satisfied him on these points, I took him up into my room that he might make acquaintance with the old chamber which is our place of meeting.

"And this," said Mr. Pickwick stopping short, "is the clock! Dear me! And this is really the old clock?"

I thought he would never have come away from it.—After advancing towards it softly, and laying his hand upon it with as much respect and as many smiling looks as if it were alive, he set himself to consider it in every possible direction, now mounting on a chair to look at the top, now going down upon his knees to examine the bottom, now surveying the sides with his spectacles almost touching the case, and now trying to peep between it and the wall to get a slight view of the back. Then, he would retire a pace or two and look up at the dial to

see it go, and then draw near again and stand with his head on one side to hear it tick: never failing to glance towards me at intervals of a few seconds each, and nod his head with such complacent gratification as I am quite unable to describe. His admiration was not confined to the clock either, but extended itself to every article in the room, and really when he had gone through them every one, and at last sat himself down in all the six chairs one after another to try how they felt, I never saw such a picture of good humour and happiness as he presented, from the top of his shining head down to the very last button of his gaiters.

I should have been well pleased, and should have had the utmost enjoyment of his company, if he had remained with me all day, but my favourite, striking the hour, reminded him that he must take his leave. I could not forbear telling him once more how glad he had made me, and we shook hands all the way down stairs.

We had no sooner arrived in the hall, than my house-keeper gliding out of her little room, (she had changed her gown and cap I observed,) greeted Mr. Pickwick with her best smile and curtsy, and the barber feigning to be accidentally passing on his way out, made him a vast number of bows. When the house-keeper curtsied, Mr. Pickwick bowed with the utmost politeness, and when he bowed the house-keeper curtsied again; between the house-keeper and the barber, I should say that Mr. Pickwick faced about and bowed with undiminished affability, fifty times at least.

I saw him to the door: an omnibus was at the moment passing the corner of the lane, which Mr. Pickwick hailed and ran after with extraordinary nimbleness. When he had got about half way he turned his head, and seeing that I was still looking after him and that I waved my hand, stopped, evidently irresolute whether to come back and shake hands again, or to go on. The man behind the omnibus shouted, and Mr. Pickwick ran a little way towards him; then he looked round at me, and ran a little way back again. Then there was another shout, and he turned round once more and ran the other way. After several of these vibrations, the man settled the question by taking Mr. Pickwick by the arm and putting him into the carriage, but his last action was to let down the window and wave his hat to me as it drove off.

I lost no time in opening the parcel Mr. Pickwick had left with me. The following were its contents:

#### MR. PICKWICK'S TALE.

A good many years have passed away since old John Podgers lived in the town of Windsor, where he was born, and where in course of time he came to be comfortably and snugly buried. You may be sure that in the time of King James the First, Windsor was a very quaint, queer old town, and you may take it upon my authority that John Podgers was a very quaint, queer old fellow; consequently he and Windsor fitted each other to a nicety, and seldom parted company, even for half a day.

John Podgers was broad, sturdy, Dutch-built, short, and a very hard eater, as men of his figure often are. Being a hard sleeper likewise, he divided his time pretty equally between these two recreations, always falling asleep when he had done eating, and always taking another turn at the trencher when he had done sleeping, by which means he grew more corpulent and more drowsy every day of his life. Indeed it used to be cur-

rently reported that when he sauntered up and down the sunny side of the street before dinner, (as he never failed to do in fair weather,) he enjoyed his soundest nap, but many held this to be a fiction, as he had several times been seen to look after fat oxen on market days, and had even been heard by persons of good credit and reputation to chuckle at the sight, and say to himself with great glee "Live beef, live beef!" It was upon this evidence that the wisest people in Windsor (beginning with the local authorities of course) held that John Podgers was a man of strong sound sense—not what is called smart, perhaps, and it might be of a rather lazy and apoplectic turn, but still a man of solid parts, and one who meant much more than he cared to show. This impression was confirmed by a very dignified way he had of shaking his head, and imparting at the same time a pendulous motion to his double chin; in short he passed for one of those people who being plunged into the Thames would make no vain efforts to set it afloat, but would straightway flop down to the bottom with a deal of gravity, and be highly respected in consequence by all good men.

Being well to do in the world, and a peaceful widower—having a great appetite, which, as he could afford to gratify it, was a luxury and no inconvenience; and a power of going to sleep, which, as he had no occasion to keep awake, was a most enviable faculty—you will readily suppose that John Podgers was a happy man. But appearances are often deceptive when they least seem so; and the truth is, that notwithstanding his extreme sleekness, he was rendered uneasy in his mind and exceedingly uncomfortable by a constant apprehension that beset him night and day.

You know very well that in those times there flourished divers evil old women, who under the name of witches spread great disorder through the land, and inflicted various dismal tortures upon Christian men: sticking pins and needles into them when they least expected it, and causing them to walk in the air with their feet upwards, to the great terror of their wives and families, who were naturally very much disconcerted when the master of the house unexpectedly came home, knocking at the door with his heels, and combing his hair on the scraper. These were their commonest pranks, but they every day played a hundred others, of which none were less objectionable and many were much more so, being improper besides; the result was that vengeance was denounced against all old women, with whom even the king himself had no sympathy, (as he certainly ought to have had,) for with his own most gracious hand he penned a most gracious consignment of them to everlasting wrath, and devised most gracious means for their confusion and slaughter, in virtue whereof scarcely a day passed but one witch at least was most graciously hanged, drowned or roasted in some part of his dominions. Still the press teemed with strange and terrible news, from the north or the south, or the east or the west, relative to witches and their unhappy victims, in some corner of the country, and the public's hair stood on end to that degree that it lifted its hat off its head, and made its face pale with terror.

You may believe that the little town of Windsor did not escape the general contagion. The inhabitants boiled a witch on the king's birthday, and sent a bottle of the broth to court, with a dutiful address expressive of their loyalty. The king being rather frightened by the present, piously bestowed it upon the Archbishop of Canterbury, and returned an answer to the address, wherein he gave them golden rules for discovering

witches, and laid great stress upon certain protecting charms, and especially horse-shoes. Immediately the towns-people went to work nailing up horse-shoes over every door, and so many anxious parents apprenticed their children to farriers, to keep them out of harm's way, that it became quite a genteel trade, and flourished exceedingly.

In the midst of all this bustle John Podgers ate and slept as usual, but shook his head a great deal oftener than was his custom, and was observed to look at the oxen less, and at the old women more. He had a little shelf put up in his sitting-room, whereon was displayed in a row which grew longer every week, all the witchcraft literature of the time; he grew learned in charms and exorcisms, hinted at certain questionable females on broomsticks whom he had seen from his chamber window riding in the air at night, and was in constant terror of being bewitched. At length from perpetually dwelling upon this one idea, which being alone in his head had it all its own way, the fear of witches became the single passion of his life. He, who up to that time had never known what it was to dream, began to have visions of witches whenever he fell asleep; waking, they were incessantly present to his imagination likewise; and sleeping or waking he had not a moment's peace. He began to set witch-traps in the highway, and was often seen lying in wait round the corner for hours together, to watch their effect. These engines were of simple construction, usually consisting of two straws disposed in the form of a cross, or a piece of a Bible cover with a pinch of salt upon it, but they were infallible, and if an old woman chanced to stumble over them (as not unfrequently happened, the chosen spot being a broken and stony place) John started from a doze, pounced upon her, and hung round her neck till assistance arrived, when she was immediately carried away and drowned. By dint of constantly inveigling old ladies and disposing of them in this summary manner, he acquired the reputation of a great public character, and as he received no harm in these pursuits beyond a scratched face or so, he came in course of time to be considered witch-proof.

There was but one person who entertained the least doubt of John Podgers's gifts, and that person was his own nephew, a wild, roving young fellow of twenty, who had been brought up in his uncle's house and lived there still—that is to say when he was at home, which was not as often as might have been. As he was an apt scholar, it was he who read aloud every fresh piece of strange and terrible intelligence that John Podgers bought; and this he always did of an evening in the little porch in front of the house, round which the neighbourhood would flock in crowds to hear direful news—for people like to be frightened, and when they can be frightened for nothing, and at another man's expense, they like it all the better.

One fine midsummer evening, a group of persons were gathered in this place listening intently to Will Marks, (that was the nephew's name) as with his cap very much on one side, his arm coiled slyly round the waist of a pretty girl who sat beside him, and his face screwed into a comical expression intended to represent extreme gravity, he read—with heaven knows how many embellishments of his own—a dismal account of a gentleman down in Northamptonshire, under the influence of witchcraft, and taken forcible possession of by the devil, who was playing his very self with him. John Podgers, in a high sugar-loaf hat and short cloak, filled the opposite seat, and surveyed the auditory with a look



of mingled pride and horror very edifying to see, while the hearers, with their heads thrust forward and their mouths open, listened and trembled, and hoped there was a great deal more to come. Sometimes Will stopped for an instant to look round upon his eager audience, and then with a more comical expression of face than before, and a settling of himself comfortably, which included a squeeze of the young lady before mentioned, he launched into some new wonder, surpassing all the others.

The setting sun shed his last golden rays upon this little party, who, absorbed in their present occupation, took no heed of the approach of night, or the glory in which the day went down, when the sound of a horse approaching at a good round trot, invading the silence of the hour, caused the reader to make a sudden stop, and the listeners to raise their heads in wonder. Nor was their wonder diminished when a horseman dashed up to the porch, and abruptly checking his steed, inquired where one John Podgers dwelt.

"Here!" cried a dozen voices, while a dozen hands pointed out sturdy John, still basking in the terrors of the pamphlet.

The rider, giving his bridle to one of those who surrounded him, dismounted, and approached John hat in hand, but with great haste.

"Whence come ye?" said John.

"From Kingston, master."

"And wherefore?"

"On most pressing business."

"Of what nature?"

"Witchcraft."

Witchcraft! Every body looked aghast at the breathless messenger, and the breathless messenger looked equally aghast at every body—except Will Marks, who finding himself unobserved, not only squeezed the young lady again, but kissed her twice. Surely he must have been bewitched himself, or he never could have done it—and the young lady too, or she never would have let him.

"Witchcraft!" cried Will, drowning the sound of his last kiss, which was rather a loud one.

The messenger turned towards him, and with a frown repeated the word more solemnly than before, then told his errand, which was, in brief, that the people of Kingston had been greatly terrified for some nights past by hideous revels, held by witches, beneath the gibbet within a mile of the town, and related and deposed to by chance wayfarers who had passed within ear-shot of the spot,—that the sound of their voices in their wild orgies had been plainly heard by many persons—that three old women laboured under strong suspicion, and that precedents had been consulted and solemn council had—and it was found that to identify the hags, some single person must watch upon the spot alone—that no single person had the courage to perform the task—and that he had been despatched express to solicit John Podgers to undertake it that very night, as being a man of great renown, who bore a charmed life, and was proof against unholy spells.

John received this communication with much composure, and said in a few words, that it would have afforded him inexpressible pleasure to do the Kingston people so slight a service, if it were not for his unfortunate propensity to fall asleep, which no man regretted more than himself upon the present occasion, but which quite settled the question. Nevertheless, he said, there was a gentleman present (and here he looked very hard at a tall farrier) who having been engaged all his life in

the manufacture of horse-shoes, must be quite invulnerable to the power of witches, and who, he had no doubt, from his known reputation for bravery and good nature, would readily accept the commission. The farrier politely thanked him for his good opinion, which it would always be his study to deserve, but added, that with great regard to the present little matter, he could not think of it on any account, as his departing on such an errand would certainly occasion the instant death of his wife, to whom, as they all knew, he was tenderly attached. Now, so far from this circumstance being notorious, every body had suspected the reverse, as the farrier was in the habit of beating his lady rather more than tender husbands usually do; all the married men present, however, applauded his resolution with great vehemence, and one and all declared that they would stop at home and die if needful (which happily it was not) in defence of their lawful partners.

This burst of enthusiasm over, they began to look as by one consent towards Will Marks, who, with his cap more on one side than ever, sat watching the proceedings with extraordinary unconcern. He had never been heard openly to express his disbelief in witches, but had often cut such jokes at their expense as left it to be inferred, publicly stating on several occasions that he considered a broomstick an inconvenient charger, and one especially unsuited to the dignity of the female character, and indulging in other free remarks of the same tendency, to the great amusement of his wild companions.

As they looked at Will, they began to whisper and murmur among themselves, and at length one man cried, "Why don't you ask Will Marks?"

As this was what every body had been thinking of, they all took up the word, and cried in concert, "Ah! why don't you ask Will?"

"He don't care," said the farrier.

"Not he," added another voice in the crowd.

"He don't believe in it, you know," sneered a little man with a yellow face and taunting nose and chin, which he thrust out from under the arm of a long man before him.

"Besides," said a red-faced gentleman with a gruff voice, "he's a single man."

"That's the point!" said the farrier; and all the married men murmured, ah! that was it, and they only wished they were single themselves, they would show him what spirit was very soon.

The messenger looked towards Will Marks beseechingly.

"It will be a wet night, friend, and my gray nag 's tired after yesterday's work—"

Here there was a general titter.

"But," resumed Will, looking about him with a smile, "if nobody else puts in a better claim to go for the credit of the town, I am your man, and I would be if I had to go afoot. In five minutes I shall be in the saddle, unless I am depriving any worthy gentleman here of the honour of the adventure, which I wouldn't do for the world."

But here arose a double difficulty, for not only did John Podgers combat the resolution with all the words he had, which were not many, but the young lady combated it too with all the tears she had, which were very many indeed. Will, however, being inflexible, parried his uncle's objections with a joke, and coaxed the young lady into a smile in three short whisps. As it was plain that he would go and set his mind upon it, John Podgers offered him a few first-rate charms out of his

own pocket, which he dutifully declined to accept, and the young lady gave him a kiss which he also returned.

"You see what a rare thing it is to be married," said Will, "and how careful and considerate all these husbands are. There's not a man among them but his heart is leaping to forestal me in this adventure, and yet his strong sense of duty keeps him back. The husbands in this one little town are a pattern to the world, and so must the wives be too, for that matter, or they could never boast half the influence they have!"

Waiting for no reply to this sarcasm, he snapped his fingers and withdrew into the house, and thence into the stable, while some busied themselves in refreshing the messenger, and others in baiting his steed. In less than the specified time, he returned by another way, with a good cloak hanging over his arm, a good sword girded by his side, and leading his good horse caparisoned for the journey.

"Now," said Will, leaping into the saddle at a bound, "up and away. Upon your mettle, friend, and push on. Good night!"

He kissed his hand to the girl, nodded to his drowsy uncle, waved his cap to the rest—and off they flew pell-mell as if all the witches in England were in their horses' legs. They were out of sight in a minute.

The men who were left behind shook their heads doubtfully, stroked their chins and shook their heads again. The farrier said that certainly Will Marks was a good horseman, nobody should ever say he denied that, but he was rash, very rash, and there was no telling what the end of it might be—what did he go for, that was what he wanted to know! He wished the young fellow no harm, but why did he go? Every body echoed these words, and shook their heads again, having done which they wished John Podgers good night, and straggled home to bed.

The Kingston people were in their first sleep, when Will Marks and his conductor rode through the town and up to the door of a house, where sundry grave functionaries were assembled, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the renowned Podgers. They were a little disappointed to find a gay young man in his place; but they put the best face upon the matter, and gave him full instructions how to conceal himself behind the gibbet, and watch and listen to the witches, and how at a certain time he was to burst forth and cut and slash among them vigorously, so that the suspected parties might be found bleeding in their beds next day, and thoroughly confounded. They gave him a great quantity of wholesome advice, besides, and—what was more to the purpose with Will—a good supper. All these things being done, and midnight nearly come, they sallied forth to show him the spot where he was to keep his dreary vigil.

The night was by this time dark and threatening. There was a rumbling of distant thunder, and a low sighing of wind among the trees, which was very dismal. The potentates of the town kept so uncommonly close to Will that they trod upon his toes, or stumbled against his ankles, or nearly tripped up his heels at every step he took; and besides these annoyances, their teeth chattered so with fear that he seemed to be accompanied by a dirge of castanets.

At last they made a halt at the opening of a lonely, desolate space, and pointing to a black object at some distance, asked Will if he saw that yonder.

"Yes," he replied. "What then?"

Informing him abruptly that it was the gibbet where

he was to watch, they wished him good night in an extremely friendly manner, and ran back as fast as their feet would carry them.

Will walked boldly to the gibbet, and glancing upward when he came under it, saw—certainly with satisfaction—that it was empty, and that nothing dangled from the top but some iron chains, which swung mournfully to and fro as they were moved by the breeze. After a careful survey of every quarter, he determined to take his station with his face towards the town; both because that would place him with his back to the wind, and because if any trick or surprise were attempted, it would probably come from that direction in the first instance. Having taken these precautions, he wrapped his cloak about him so that it left the handle of his sword free, and ready to his hand, and leaning against the gallows-tree, with his cap not quite so much on one side as it had been before, took up his position for the night.

#### SECOND CHAPTER OF MR. PICKWICK'S TALE.

We left Will Marks leaning under the gibbet, with his face towards the town, scanning the distance with a keen eye which sought to pierce the darkness, and catch the earliest glimpse of any person or persons that might approach towards him. But all was quiet, and, save the howling of the wind as it swept across the heath in gusts, and the creaking of the chains that dangled above his head, there was no sound to break the sullen stillness of the night. After half an hour or so, this monotony became more disconcerting to Will than the most furious uproar would have been, and he heartily wished for some one antagonistic with whom he might have a fair stand-up fight, if it were only to warm himself.

Truth to tell, it was a bitter wind, and seemed to blow to the very heart of a man whose blood, heated but now with rapid riding, was more sensitive to the chilling blast. Will was a daring fellow, and cared not a jot for hard knocks or sharp blades, but he could not persuade himself to move or walk about, having just that vague expectation of a sudden assault which made it a comfortable thing to have something at his back, even though that something were a gallows-tree. He had no great faith in the superstitions of the age, still such of them as occurred to him did not serve to lighten the time or render his situation the more endurable. He remembered how witches were said to repair at the ghostly hour to church-yards and gibbets, and such like dismal spots, to pluck the bleeding mandrake, or scrape the flesh from dead men's bones, as choice ingredients for their spells; how, stealing by night to lonely places, they dug graves with their finger-nails, or anointed themselves before riding in the air, with a delicate pomatum made of the fat of infants newly boiled. These, and many other fabled practices of a no less agreeable nature, and all having some reference to the circumstances in which he was placed, passed and repassed in quick succession through the mind of Will Marks, and adding a shadowy dread to that distrust and watchfulness which his situation inspired, rendered it upon the whole sufficiently uncomfortable. As he had foreseen, too, the rain began to descend heavily, and driving before the wind in a thick mist, obscured even those few objects which the darkness of the night had before imperfectly revealed.

"Look!" shrieked a voice, "Great Heaven, it has fallen down, and stands erect as if it lived!"

The speaker was close behind him—the voice was

almost at his ear. Will threw off his cloak, drew his sword, and darting swiftly round, seized a woman by the wrist, who, recoiling from him with a dreadful shriek, fell struggling upon her knees. Another woman, clad like her whom he had grasped, in mourning garments, stood rooted to the spot on which they were, gazing upon his face with wild and glaring eyes that quite appalled him.

"Say," cried Will, when they had confronted each other thus for some time, "what are ye!"

"Say what are *you*," returned the woman, "who trouble even this obscene resting-place of the dead, and strip the gibbet of its honored burden? Where is the body?"

He looked in wonder and affright from the woman who questioned him, to the other whose arm he clutched.

"Where is the body?" repeated his questioner, more firmly than before; "you wear no livery which marks you for the hiring of the government. You are no friend to us, or I should recognise you; for the friends of such as we are few in number. What are you then, and wherefore are you here?"

"I am no foe to the distressed and helpless," said Will. "Are ye among that number! ye should be by your looks."

"We are!" was the answer.

"It is ye who have been wailing and weeping here, under cover of the night!" said Will.

"It is," replied the woman, sternly, and pointing, as she spoke, towards her companion, "she mourns a husband, and I a brother. Even the bloody law that wreaks its vengeance on the dead, does not make that a crime; and if it did, 'twould be alike to us who are past its fear or favour."

Will glanced at the two females, and could barely discern that the one whom he addressed was much the elder, and that the other was young and of a slight figure. Both were deadly pale, their garments wet and torn, their hair dishevelled and streaming in the wind, themselves bowed down with grief and misery; their whole appearance most dejected, wretched, and forlorn. A sight so different from any he had expected to encounter, touched him to the quick, and all idea of any thing but their pitiable condition, vanished before it.

"I am a rough, blunt yeoman," said Will; "why I came here is told in a word; you have been overheard at a distance in the silence of the night, and I have undertaken a watch for hags or spirits. I came here expecting an adventure, and prepared to go through with any. If there be aught that I can do to help or aid you, name it, and on the faith of a man who can be secret and trusty, I will stand by you to the death."

"How comes this gibbet to be empty?" asked the elder female.

"I swear to you," replied Will, "that I know as little as yourself. But this I know, that when I came here an hour ago, or so, it was as it is now; and if, as I gather from your question, it was not so last night, sure I am that it has been secretly disturbed without the knowledge of the folks in yonder town. Bethink you, therefore, whether you may have no friends in league with you, or with him on whom the law has done its worst, by whom these sad remains have been removed for burial."

The women spoke together, and Will retired a pace or two while they conversed apart. He could hear them sob and moan, and saw that they wrung their hands in fruitless agony. He could make out little that they said, but between whiles he gathered enough to assure him

that his suggestion was not very wide of the mark, and that they not only suspected by whom the body had been removed, but also whither it had been conveyed. When they had been in conversation a long time, they turned towards him once more. This time the younger female spoke.

"You have offered us your help?"

"I have."

"And given a pledge that you are still willing to redeem?"

"Yes. So far as I may, keeping all plots and conspiracies at arm's length."

"Follow us, friend."

Will, whose self-possession was now quite restored, needed no second bidding, but with his drawn sword in his hand, and his cloak so muffled over his left arm as to serve for a kind of shield without offering any impediment to its free action, suffered them to lead the way. Through mud and mire, and wind and rain, they walked in silence a full mile. At length they turned into a dark lane, where, suddenly starting out from beneath some trees where he had taken shelter, a man appeared having in his charge three saddled horses. One of these (his own apparently) in obedience to a whisper from the women, he consigned to Will, who, seeing that they mounted, mounted also. Then, without a word spoken, they rode on together, leaving the attendant behind.

They made no halt nor slackened their pace until they arrived near Putney. At a large wooden house which stood apart from any other, they alighted, and giving their horses to one who was already waiting, passed in by a side door, and so up some narrow creaking stairs into a small paneled chamber, where Will was left alone. He had not been here very long, when the door was softly opened, and there entered to him a cavalier whose face was concealed beneath a black mask.

Will stood upon his guard, and scrutinised this figure from head to foot. The form was that of a man pretty far advanced in life, but of a firm and stately carriage. His dress was of a rich and costly kind, but so soiled and disordered that it was scarcely to be recognised for one of those gorgeous suits which the expensive taste and fashion of the time prescribed for men of any rank or station. He was booted and spurred, and bore about him even as many tokens of the state of the roads as Will himself. All this he noted while the eyes behind the mask regarded him with equal attention. This survey over, the cavalier broke silence.

"Thou'rt young and bold, and would'st be richer than thou art?"

"The two first I am," returned Will. "The last I have scarcely thought of. But be it so. Say that I would be richer than I am; what then?"

"The way lies before thee now," replied the mask.

"Show it me."

"First let me inform thee, that thou wert brought here to-night lest thou should'st too soon have told thy tale to those who placed thee on the watch."

"I thought as much when I followed," said Will. "But I am no blab, not I."

"Good," returned the mask. "Now listen.—He who was to have executed the enterprise of burying that body, which as thou hast suspected was taken down to-night, has left us in our need."

Will nodded, and thought within himself that if the mask were to attempt to play any tricks, the first eyelet-hole on the left-hand side of his doublet, counting from

the buttons up the front, would be a very good place in which to pink him neatly.

"Thou art here, and the emergency is desperate. I propose this task to thee. Convey the body (now confined in this house) by means that I shall show, to the church of Saint Dunstan, in London, to-morrow-night, and thy service shall be richly paid. Thou'rt about to ask whose corpse it is.—Seek not to know. I warn thee, seek not to know. Felons hang in chains on every moor and heath. Believe as others do, that this was one, and ask no further. The murders of state policy, its victims or avengers, had best remain unknown to such as thee."

"The mystery of this service," said Will, "bespeaks its danger. What is the reward?"

"One hundred golden unities," replied the cavalier. "The danger to one who cannot be recognised as the friend of a fallen cause is not great, but there is some hazard to be run. Decide between that and the reward."

"What if I refuse?" said Will.

"Depart in peace, in God's name," returned the mask, in a melancholy tone, "and keep our secret: remembering that those who brought thee here were crushed and stricken women, and that those who bade thee go free could have had thy life with one word, and no man the wiser."

Men were readier to undertake desperate adventures in those times, than they are now. In this case the temptation was great, and the punishment even in case of detection was not likely to be very severe, as Will came of a loyal stock, and his uncle was in good repute, and a passable tale to account for his possession of the body and his ignorance of the identity, might be easily devised. The cavalier explained that a covered cart had been prepared for the purpose; that the time of departure could be arranged so that he should reach London Bridge, at dusk, and proceed through the city after the day had closed in; that people would be ready at his journey's end to place the coffin in a vault without a minute's delay; that officious inquirers in the streets would be easily repelled by the tale that he was carrying for interment the corpse of one who had died of the plague; and in short showed him every reason why he should succeed and none why he should fail. After a time they were joined by another gentleman, masked like the first, who added new arguments to those which had been already urged; the wretched wife too added her tears and prayers to their calmer representations; and in the end Will, moved by compassion and good-nature, by a love of the marvellous, by a mischievous anticipation of the terrors of the Kingston people, when he should be missing next day, and finally by the prospect of gain, took upon himself the task, and devoted all his energies to its successful execution.

The following night, when it was quite dark, the hollow echoes of old London bridge responded to the rumbling of the cart which contained the ghastly load, the object of Will Marks's care. Sufficiently disguised to attract no attention by his garb, Will walked at the horse's head, as unconcerned as a man could be who was sensible that he had now arrived at the most dangerous part of his undertaking, but full of boldness and confidence.

It was now eight o'clock. After nine, none could walk the streets without danger of their lives; and even at this hour, robberies and murder were of no uncommon occurrence. The shops upon the bridge were all closed; the low wooden arches thrown across the way were like

so many black pits, in every one of which ill-favoured fellows lurked in knots of three or four; some standing upright against the wall lying in wait, others skulking in gate-ways and thrusting out their uncombed heads and scowling eyes, others crossing and recrossing and constantly jostling both horse and man to provoke a quarrel, others stealing away and summoning their companions in a low whistle. Once, even in that short passage, there was the noise of scuffling and the clash of swords behind him; but Will, who knew the city and its ways, kept straight on and scarcely turned his head.

The streets being unpaved, the rain of the night before had converted them into a perfect quagmire, which the splashing water-spouts from the gables, and the filth and offal cast from the different houses, swelled in no small degree. These odious matters being left to putrefy in the close and heavy air, emitted an unsupportable stench, to which every court and passage poured forth a contribution of its own. Many parts even of the main streets, with their projecting stories tottering overhead and nearly shutting out the sky, were more like huge chimneys than open ways. At the corners of some of these, great bonfires were burning to prevent infection from the plague, of which it was rumored that some citizens had lately died; and few, who availing themselves of the light thus afforded, paused for a moment to look around them, would have been disposed to doubt the existence of the disease or wonder at its dreadful visitations.

But it was not in such scenes as these, or even in the deep and miry road, that Will Marks found the chief obstacles to his progress. There were kites and ravens feeding in the streets (the only scavengers the city kept) who scented what he carried, followed the cart or fluttered on its top, and croaked their knowledge of its burden and their ravenous appetite for prey. There were distant fires, where the poor wood and plaster tenements wasted fiercely, and whither crowds made their way, clamouring eagerly for plunder, beating down all who came within their reach, and yelling like devils set loose. There were single-handed men flying from bands of ruffians, who pursued them with naked weapons, and hunted them savagely; there were drunk desperate robbers issuing from their dens, and staggering through the open streets where no man dared molest them; there were vagabond servitors returning from the Bear Garden, where had been good sport that day, dragging after them their torn and bleeding dogs, or leaving them to die or rot upon the road. Nothing was abroad but cruelty, violence, and disorder.

Many were the interruptions which Will Marks encountered from these stragglers, and many the narrow escapes he made. Now some stout bully would take his seat upon the cart, insisting to be driven to his own home; and now two or three men would come down upon him together, and demand that on the peril of his life he showed them what he had inside. Then a party of the city watch upon their rounds would draw across the road, and not satisfied with his tale, question him closely, and revenge themselves by a little cuffing and hustling for maltreatment sustained at other hands that night. All these assailants had to be rebutted, some by fair words, some by foul, and some by blows. But Will Marks was not the man to be stopped or turned back now he had penetrated so far, and though he got on slowly, still he made his way down Fleet-street, and reached the church at last.

As had been forewarned, all was in readiness. Directly he stopped, the coffin was removed by four men,



who appeared so suddenly, that they seemed to have started from the earth. A fifth mounted the cart, and scarcely allowing Will time to snatch from it a little bundle containing such of his own clothes as he had thrown off on assuming his disguise, drove briskly away. Will never saw cart or man again.

He followed the body into the church, and it was well he lost no time in doing so, for the door was immediately closed. There was no light in the building save that which came from a couple of torches borne by two men, in cloaks, who stood upon the brink of a vault. Each supported a female figure, and all observed a profound silence.

By this dim and solemn glare, which made Will feel as though light itself were dead, and its tomb the dreary arches that frowned above, they placed the coffin in the vault, with uncovered heads, and closed it up. One of the torch-bearers then turned to Will, and stretched forth his hand, in which was a purse of gold. Something told him directly that those were the same eyes he had seen beneath the mask.

"Take it," said the cavalier, in a low voice, "and be happy. Though these have been hasty obsequies, and no priest has blessed the work, there will not be the less peace with thee hereafter, for having laid his bones beside those of his little children. Keep thy own counsel, for thy sake no less than ours, and God be with thee!"

"The blessing of a widowed mother on thy head, good friend!" cried the younger lady, through her tears; "the blessing of one who has now no hope or rest but in this grave!"

Will stood with the purse in his hand, and involuntarily made a gesture as though he would return it; for, though a thoughtless fellow, he was of a frank and generous nature. But the two gentlemen extinguishing their torches, cautioned him to be gone, as their common safety would be endangered by a longer delay; and at the same time their retreating footsteps sounded through the church. He turned, therefore, towards the point at which he had entered, and seeing by a faint gleam in the distance that the door was again partially open, groped his way towards it, and so passed into the street.

Meantime the local authorities of Kingston had kept watch and ward all the previous night, fancying every now and then that dismal shrieks were borne towards them on the wind, and frequently winking to each other, and drawing closer to the fire as they drank the health of the lonely sentinel, upon whom a clerical gentlemen present was especially severe by reason of his levity and youthful folly. Two or three of the gravest in company, who were of a theological turn, propounded to him the question whether such a character was not but poorly armed for single combat with the devil, and whether he himself would not have been a stronger opponent; but the clerical gentleman, sharply reproving them for their presumption in discussing such questions, clearly showed that a fitter champion than Will could scarcely have been selected, not only for that being a child of Satan, he was the less likely to be alarmed by the appearance of his own father, but because Satan himself would be at ease in such company, and would not scruple to kick up his heels to an extent which it was quite certain he would never venture before clerical eyes, under whose influence (as was notorious) he became quite a tame and milk-and-water character.

But when next morning arrived, and with it no Will Marks, and when a strong party repairing to the spot, as a strong party ventured to do in broad day, found Will

gone and the gibbet empty, matters grew serious indeed. The day passing away and no news arriving, and the night going on also without any intelligence, the thing grew more tremendous still; in short, the neighbourhood worked itself up to such a comfortable pitch of mystery and horror, that it is a great question whether the general feeling was not one of excessive disappointment when, on the second morning, Will Marks returned.

However this may be, back Will came in a very cool and collected state, and appearing not to trouble himself much about any body except old John Podgers, who, having been sent for, was sitting in the Town Hall, crying slowly and dozing between whiles. Having embraced his uncle, and assured him of his safety, Will mounted on a table and told his story to the crowd.

And surely they would have been the most unreasonable crowd that ever assembled together, if they had been in the least respect disappointed with the tale he told them, for besides describing the Witches' Dance to the minutest motion of their legs, and performing it in character on the table, with the assistance of a broomstick, he related how they carried off the body in a copper cauldron, and so bewitched him that he lost his senses until he found himself lying under a hedge at least ten miles off, whence he had straightway returned, as they then beheld. The story gained such universal applause that it soon afterwards brought down express from London, the great witch-finder of the age, the heaven-born Hopkins, who, having examined Will closely on several points, pronounced it the most extraordinary and the best accredited witch story ever known, under which title it was published at the Three-Bibles, on London bridge, in small quarto, with a view of the cauldron, from an original drawing, and a portrait of the clerical gentleman as he sat by the fire.

On one point, Will was particularly careful, and that was, to describe, for the witches he had seen, three impossible old females whose likenesses never were or will be. Thus he saved the lives of the suspected parties, and of all other old women who were dragged before him to be identified.

This circumstance occasioned John Podgers much grief and sorrow, until happening one day to cast his eyes upon his housekeeper, and observing her to be plainly afflicted with rheumatism, he procured her to be burnt as an undoubted witch. For this service to the state, he was immediately knighted, and became from that time Sir John Podgers.

Will Marks never gained any clue to the mystery in which he had been an actor, nor did any inscription in the church, which he often visited afterwards, nor any of the limited inquiries that he dared to make, yield him the least assistance. As he kept his own secrets, he was compelled to spend his gold discreetly and sparingly. In course of time, he married the young lady of whom I have already told you, whose maiden name is not recorded, with whom he led a prosperous and happy life. Years and years after this adventure it was his wont to tell her upon a stormy night, that it was a great comfort to him to think that those bones, to whomsoever they might once have belonged, were not bleaching in the troubled air, but were mouldering away, with the dust of their own kith and kindred, in a quiet grave.

As we were going up stairs, Mr. Pickwick put on his spectacles which he had held in his hand hitherto; arranged his neckerchief, smoothed down his waistcoat, and made many other little preparations of that kind

which men are accustomed to be mindful of, when they are going among strangers for the first time, and are anxious to impress them pleasantly. Seeing that I smiled, he smiled too, and said that if it had occurred to him before he left home, he would certainly have presented himself in pumps and silk stockings.

"I would indeed, my dear sir," he said very seriously; "I would have shown my respect for the society, by laying aside my gaiters."

"You may rest assured," said I, "that they would have regretted your doing so, very much, for they are quite attached to them."

"No, really!" cried Mr. Pickwick with manifest pleasure. "Do you think they care about my gaiters? Do you seriously think that they identify me at all with my gaiters?"

"I am sure, they do," I replied.

"Well now," said Mr. Pickwick, "that is one of the most charming and agreeable circumstances that could possibly have occurred to me!"

I should not have written down this short conversation, but that it developed a slight point in Mr. Pickwick's character, with which I was not previously acquainted. He has a secret pride in his legs. The manner in which he spoke, and the accompanying glance he bestowed upon his tights, convince me that Mr. Pickwick regards his legs with much innocent vanity.

"But here are our friends," said I, opening the door and taking his arm in mine; "let them speak for themselves. Gentlemen, I present to you Mr. Pickwick."

Mr. Pickwick and I must have been a good contrast just then. I leaning quietly on my crutch-stick with something of a care-worn, patient air; he having hold of my arm, and bowing in every direction with the most elastic politeness, and an expression of face whose sprightly, cheerfulness and good humour, knew no bounds. The difference between us must have been more striking yet as we advanced towards the table, and the amiable gentleman, adapting his jocund steps to my poor tread, had his attention divided between treating my infirmities with the utmost consideration, and affecting to be wholly unconscious that I required any.

I had made him personally known to each of my friends in turn. First, to the deaf gentlemen, whom he regarded with much interest, and accosted with great frankness and cordiality. He had evidently some vague idea, at the moment, that my friend being deaf must be dumb also; for when the latter opened his lips to express the pleasure it afforded him to know a gentleman of whom he had heard so much, Mr. Pickwick was so extremely disconcerted that I was obliged to step in to his relief.

His meeting with Jack Redburn was quite a treat to see. Mr. Pickwick smiled, and shook hands, and looked at him through his spectacles, and under them, and over them, and nodded his head approvingly, and then nodded to me, as much as to say, "this is just the man; you were quite right," and then turned to Jack and said a few hearty words, and then did and said every thing over again with unimpaired vivacity. As to Jack himself, he was quite as much delighted with Mr. Pickwick, as Mr. Pickwick could possibly be with him. Two people never can have met together since the world began, who exchanged a warmer or more enthusiastic greeting.

It was amusing to observe the difference between this encounter, and that which succeeded, between Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Miles. It was clear that the latter gentleman viewed our new member as a kind of rival in the affections

of Jack Redburn, and besides this, he had more than once hinted to me, that he did consider that some of his exploits were unbecoming a gentleman of his years and gravity. Over and above these grounds of distrust, it is one of his fixed opinions that the law cannot possibly do any thing wrong; he therefore looks upon Mr. Pickwick as one who has justly suffered in purse and peace for a breach of his plighted faith to an unprotected female, and holds that he is called upon to regard him with some suspicion on that account. These causes led to a rather cold and formal reception; which Mr. Pickwick acknowledged with the same stateliness and intense politeness as was displayed on the other side. Indeed, he assumed an air of such majestic defiance, that I was fearful he might break out into some solemn protest or declaration, and therefore inducted him into his chair without a moment's delay.

This piece of generalship was perfectly successful. The instant he took his seat, Mr. Pickwick surveyed us all with a most benevolent aspect, and was taken with a fit of smiling full five minutes long. His interest in our ceremonies was immense. They are not very numerous or complicated, and a description of them may be comprised in very few words. As our transactions have already been, and must necessarily continue to be, more or less anticipated by being presented in these pages at different times and under various forms, they do not require a detailed account.

Our first proceeding when we are assembled, is, to shake hands all round, and greet each other with cheerful and pleasant looks. Remembering that we assemble, not only for the promotion of our own happiness, but with the view of adding something to the common stock, an air of languor or indifference in any member of our body would be regarded by the others as a kind of treason. We have never had an offender in this respect; but if we had, there is no doubt that he would be taken to task pretty severely.

Our salutation over, the venerable piece of antiquity from which we take our name is wound up in silence. This ceremony is always performed by Master Humphrey himself, (in treating of the club, I may be permitted to assume the historical style, and speak of myself in the third person,) who mounts upon a chair for the purpose, armed with a large key. While it is in progress, Jack Redburn is required to keep at the further end of the room under the guardianship of Mr. Miles, for he is known to entertain certain aspiring and unhallowed thoughts connected with the clock, and has even gone so far as to state that if he might take the works out for a day or two, he thinks, he could improve them.

We pardon him his presumption in consideration of his good intentions, and his keeping this respectful distance, which last penalty is insisted on, lest by secretly wounding the object of our regard in some tender point, in the ardor of his zeal for its improvement, he should fill us all with dismay and consternation.

This regulation afforded Mr. Pickwick the highest delight, and seemed, if possible, to exalt Jack in his good opinion.

The next ceremony is the opening of the clock-case (of which Master Humphrey has likewise the key,) the taking from it as many papers as will furnish forth our evening's entertainment, and arranging in the recess such new contributions as have been provided since our last meeting. This is always done with peculiar solemnity. The deaf gentleman then fills and lights his pipe, and we once more take our seats round the table

before mentioned, Master Humphrey acting as president—if we can be said to have any president, where all are on the same social footing—and our friend Jack as secretary. Our preliminaries being now concluded, we fall into any train of conversation that happens to suggest itself, or proceed immediately to one of our readings. In the latter case, the paper selected is consigned to Master Humphrey, who flattens it carefully on the table and makes dog's ears in the corner of every page, ready for turning over easily; Jack Redburn trims the lamp with a small machine of his own invention which usually puts it out; Mr. Miles looks on with great approval notwithstanding; the deaf gentleman draws in his chair, so that he can follow the words on the paper or on Master Humphrey's lips, as he pleases; and Master Humphrey himself, looking round with mighty gratification and glancing up at his old clock, begins to read aloud.

Mr. Pickwick's face, while his tale was being read, would have attracted the attention of the dullest man alive. The complacent motion of his head and forefinger as he gently beat time and corrected the air with the imaginary punctuation, the smile that mantled on his features at every jocose passage, and the sly look he stole around to observe its effect, the calm manner in which he shut his eyes and listened when there was some little piece of description, the changing expression with which he acted the dialogue to himself, his agony that the deaf gentleman should know what it was all about, and his extraordinary anxiety to correct the reader when he hesitated at a word in the manuscript or substituted a wrong one, were alike worthy of remark. And when at last, after endeavouring to communicate with the deaf gentleman by means of the finger alphabet, with which he constructed such words as are unknown in any civilized or savage language, he took up a slate and wrote in large text, one word in a line, the question, "How—do—you—like it?"—when he did this, and handing it over the table, awaited the reply, with a countenance only brightened and improved by his great excitement, even Mr. Miles relaxed, and could not forbear looking at him for the moment with interest and favour.

"It has occurred to me," said the deaf gentleman, who had watched Mr. Pickwick and every body else with silent satisfaction, "it has occurred to me," said the deaf gentleman, taking his pipe from his lips, "that now is our time for filling our only empty chair."

As our conversation had naturally turned upon our vacant seat, we lent a willing ear to the remark, and looked at our old friend inquiringly.

"I feel sure," said he, "that Mr. Pickwick must be acquainted with somebody who would be an acquisition to us; that he must know the man we want. Pray let us not lose any time, but set this question at rest. Is it so, Mr. Pickwick?"

The gentleman addressed was about to return a verbal reply, but remembering our friend's infirmity he substituted for this kind of answer some fifty nods. Then taking up the slate and printing on it a gigantic "Yes," he handed it across the table, and rubbing his hands as he looked round upon our faces, protested that he and the deaf gentleman quite understood each other already.

"The person I have in my mind," said Mr. Pickwick, "and whom I should not have presumed to mention to you until some time hence, but for the opportunity you have given me, is a very strange old man. His name is Bamber."

"Bamber!" said Jack, "I have certainly heard the name before."

"I have no doubt then," returned Mr. Pickwick, "that you remember him in those adventures of mine (the Posthumous Papers of our old club, I mean) although he is only incidentally mentioned; and if I remember right, appears but once."

"That's it," said Jack. "Let me see. He is the person who has a grave interest in the old mouldy chambers and the inns of court, and relates some anecdotes having reference to his favourite theme—and an old ghost story—is that the man?"

"The very same. Now," said Mr. Pickwick, lowering his voice to a mysterious and confidential tone, "he is a very extraordinary and remarkable person; living, and talking, and looking, like some strange spirit, whose delight is to haunt old buildings; and absorbed in that one subject which you have just mentioned, to an extent which is quite wonderful. When I retired into private life, I sought him out, and I do assure you that the more I see of him, the more strongly I am impressed with the strange and dreamy character of his mind."

"Where does he live?" I inquired.

"He lives," said Mr. Pickwick, "in one of those dull, lonely old places with which his thoughts and stories are all connected; quite alone, and often shut up close, for several weeks together. In this dusty solitude, he broods upon the fancies he has so long indulged, and when he goes into the world, or any body from the world without goes to see him, they all present to his mind and still his favourite topic.—I may say, I believe, that he has brought himself to entertain a regard for me, and an interest in my visits; feelings which I am certain he would extend to Master Humphrey's Clock if he were once tempted to join us. All I wish you to understand is, that he is a strange deluded visionary, in the world but not of it; and as unlike any body here as he is unlike any body elsewhere, that ever I have met, or known."

Mr. Miles received this account of our proposed companion with rather a wry face, and after murmuring that perhaps he was a little mad, inquired if he were rich.

"I never asked him," said Mr. Pickwick.

"You might know, sir, for all that," retorted Mr. Miles, sharply.

"Perhaps so, sir," said Mr. Pickwick, no less sharply than the other, "but I do not. Indeed," he added, relapsing into his usual mildness, "I have no means of judging. He lives poorly, but that would seem to be in keeping with his character. I never heard him allude to his circumstances, and never fell into the society of any man who had the slightest acquaintance with them. I really have told you all I know about him, and it rests with you to say whether you wish to know more, or know quite enough already."

We were unanimously of opinion that we would seek to know more; and as a sort of compromise with Mr. Miles, (who although he said "yes—oh certainly—he should like to know more about the gentleman—he had no right to put himself in opposition to the general wish"—and so forth, shook his head doubtfully and hemmed several times with peculiar gravity,) it was arranged that Mr. Pickwick should carry me with him on an evening visit to the subject of our discussion, for which purpose an early appointment between that gentleman and myself was immediately agreed upon; it being understood that I was to act on my own responsibility, and invite him to join us, or not, as I might think proper.

This solemn question determined, we returned to the clock-case, (where we have been forestalled by the reader,) and between its contents, and the conversation they occasioned, the remainder of our time passed very quickly.

When we broke up, Mr. Pickwick took me aside, to tell me that he had spent a most delightful evening. Having made this communication with an air of the strictest secrecy, he took Jack Redburn into another corner to tell him the same, and then retired into another corner with the deaf gentleman and the slate, to repeat his assurance. It was amusing to observe the contest in his mind, whether he should extend his confidence to Mr. Miles, or treat him with dignified reserve. Half a dozen times he stepped back again without saying a word; at last, when he was close at that gentleman's ear, and upon the very point of whispering something conciliating and agreeable, Mr. Miles happened suddenly to turn his head, upon which Mr. Pickwick skipped away with some fierceness, "Good night, sir—I was about to say good night, sir—nothing more;" and so made a bow and left him.

"Now, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, when he got down stairs.

"All right, sir," replied Mr. Weller. "Hold hard, sir, right arm first—now the left—now one strong convulsion and the great coat's on, sir."

Mr. Pickwick acted upon these directions, and being further assisted by Sam, who pulled at one side of the collar, and the elder Mr. Weller, who pulled hard at the other, was speedily enrobed. Mr. Weller, senior, then produced a full sized stable lantern which he had carefully deposited in a remote corner on his arrival, and inquired whether Mr. Pickwick would have "the lamps alight."

"I think not to-night," said Mr. Pickwick.

"Then if this here lady will per-mit," rejoined Mr. Weller, "we'll leave it here ready for next journey. This here lantern, mum," said Mr. Weller, handing it to the house-keeper, "vunce belonged to the celebrated Bill Blinder as is now at grass, as all on us will be in our turns. Bill, mum, was the hosler as had charge o' them two vel known piebald leaders that run in the Bristol fast coach, and vould never go to no other tune but a southerly vind and a cloudy sky, which was consecvently played incessant, by the guard, whenever they was on duty. He was took very bad one afternoon, arter having been off his feed, and very shaky on his legs for some verks; and he says to the maie, 'Matey,' he says, 'I think I'm goin' the wrong side o' the post, and that my foot's wery near the bucket. Don't say I a'nt,' he says, 'for I know I am, and don't let me be interrupted,' he says, 'for I've saved a little money, and I'm a-goin' into the stable to make my last vill and testament.' 'I'll take care as nobody interrupts you,' says his mates, 'but you on'y hold up your head, and shake your ears a bit, and you're good for twenty years to come.' Bill Blinder makes him no answer, but he goes away into the stable, and there he soon arterwards lays himself down a'tween the two piebalds, and dies,—previously a-writin' outside the corn-chest, 'This is the last vill and testyment of Villiam Blinder.' They was nat'rally very much amazed at this, and arter looking among the litter, and upon the loft, and vere not, they opens the corn-chest, and finds that he'd been and chalked his vill inside the lid; so the lid was obligated to be took off the hinges, and sent up to Doctor's Commons to be proved, and under that ere wery instrument

this here lantern was passed to 'Tony Veller, vich circumstance, mum, gives it a wally in my eyes, and makes me rek-vest, if you will be so kind, as to take particular care on it."

The housekeeper graciously promised to keep the object of Mr. Weller's regard in the safest possible custody, and Mr. Pickwick, with a laughing face, took his leave. The body-guard followed side by side: old Mr. Weller buttoned and wrapped up from his boots to his chin; and Sam followed with his hands in his pockets and his hat half on his head, remonstrating with his father, as he went, on his extreme loquacity.

I was not a little surprised, on turning to go up stairs, to encounter the barber in the passage at that late hour; for his attendance is usually confined to some half-hour in the morning. But Jack Redburn, who finds out (by instinct, I think) every thing that happens in the house, informed me with great glee, that a society in imitation of our own had been that night formed in the kitchen, under the title of "Mr. Weller's Watch," of which the barber was a member; and that he could pledge himself to find means of making me acquainted with the whole of its future proceedings, which I begged him both on my account and that of my readers, by no means to neglect doing.

## THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

### CHAPTER II.

After combating, for nearly a week, the feeling which impelled me to revisit the place I had quitted under the circumstances already detailed, I yielded to it at length; and determining that this time I would present myself by the light of day, bent myself thither early in the afternoon.

I walked past the house, and took several turns in the street, with that kind of hesitation which is natural to a man who is conscious that the visit he is about to pay is unexpected, and may not be very acceptable.

However, as the door of the shop was shut, and it did not appear likely that I should be recognised by those within, if I continued merely to pass up and down before it, I soon conquered this irresolution, and found myself in the Curiosity Dealer's warehouse.

The old man and another person were together in the back part, and there seemed to have been high words between them, for their voices which were raised to a very loud pitch suddenly stopped on my entering, and the old man advancing hastily towards me, said in a tremulous tone that he was very glad I had come.

"You interrupted us at a critical moment," he said, pointing to the man I had found in company with him; "this fellow will murder me one of these days. He would have done so, long ago, if he had dared."

"Bah! you would swear away my life if you could," returned the other, after bestowing a stare and a frown on me; "we all know that."

"I almost think I could," cried the old man, turning feebly upon him. "If oaths, or prayers, or words could rid me of you, they should. I would be quit of you, and would be relieved if you were dead."

"I know it," returned the other. "I said so, didn't I? But neither oaths, nor prayers, nor words, will kill me, and therefore I live, and mean to live."



"And his mother died!" cried the old man, passionately clasping his hands and looking upward; "and this is Heaven's justice!"

The other stood lounging with his foot upon a chair, and regarded him with a contemptuous sneer. He was a young man of one-and-twenty or thereabouts; well made, and certainly handsome, though the expression of his face was far from prepossessing, having, in common with his manner and even his dress, a dissipated, insolent air which repelled one.

"Justice or no justice," said the young man, "here I am and here I shall stop till such time as I think fit to go, unless you send for assistance to put me out—which you won't do, I know. I tell you again that I want to see my sister."

"Your sister," said the old man, bitterly.

"Ah! You can't change the relationship," returned the other. "If you could, you'd have done it long ago. I want to see my sister, that you cooped up here, poisoning her mind with your sly secrets, and pretending an affection for her that you may work her to death, and add a few scraped shillings every week to the money you can hardly count. I want to see her; and I will."

"Here's a moralist to talk of poisoned minds! Here's a generous spirit to scorn scraped-up shillings!" cried the old man, turning from him to me. "A profligate, sir, who has forfeited every claim not only upon those who have the misfortune to be of his blood, but upon society which knows nothing of him but his misdeeds. A liar, too," he added in a lower voice as he drew closer to me, "who knows how dear she is to me, and seeks to wound me even there, because there is a stranger by."

"Strangers are nothing to me, grandfather," said the young fellow, catching at the word, "nor I to them. I hope. The best they can do is to keep an eye to their business and leave me to mine. There's a friend of mine waiting outside, and as it seems that I may have to wait some time, I'll call him in, with your leave."

Saying this, he stepped to the door, and looking down the street beckoned several times to some unseen person, who, to judge from the air of impatience with which these signals were accompanied, required a great quantity of persuasion to induce him to advance. At length there sauntered up, on the other side of the way—with a bad pretence of passing by accident—a figure conspicuous for its dirty smartness, which after many frowns and jerks of the head, in resistance of the invitation, ultimately crossed the road and was brought into the shop.

"There. It's Dick Swiveller," said the young fellow, pushing him in. "Sit down, Swiveller."

"But is the old man agreeable?" said Mr. Swiveller in an under tone.

"Sit down," repeated his companion.

Mr. Swiveller complied, and looking about him with a propitiatory smile, observed that last week was a fine week for the ducks, and this week was a fine week for the dust; he also observed that while standing by the post at the street corner, he had observed a pig with a straw in his mouth issuing out of the tobacco-shop, from which appearance he argued that another fine week for the ducks was approaching, and that rain would certainly ensue. He furthermore took occasion to apologise for any negligence that might be perceptible in his dress, on the ground that last night he had had "the sun very strong in his eyes;" by which expression he was understood to convey to his hearers in the most delicate man-

ner possible, the information that he had been extremely drunk.

"But what," said Mr. Swiveller with a sigh, "what is the odds so long as the fire of soul is kindled at the taper of conviviality, and the wing of friendship never moults a feather!—What is the odds so long as the spirit is expanded by means of rosy wine, and the present moment is the least happiest of our existence!"

"You needn't act the chairman here," said his friend, half aside.

"Fred," cried Mr. Swiveller, tapping his nose, "a word to the wise is sufficient for them—we may be good and happy without riches, Fred. Say not another syllable. I know my cue; smart is the word. Only one little whisper, Fred—is the old man friendly?"

"Never mind," replied his friend.

"Right again, quite right," said Mr. Swiveller, "caution is the word, and caution is the act." With what, he winked as if in preservation of some deep secret, and folding his arms and leaning back in his chair, looked up at the ceiling with profound gravity.

It was perhaps not very unreasonable to suspect from what had already passed, that Mr. Swiveller was not quite recovered from the effects of the powerful sunlight to which he had made allusion; but if no suspicion had been awakened by his speech, his wiry hair, dull eyes, and sallow face, would still have been strong witnesses against him. His attire was not, as he had himself hinted, remarkable for the nicest arrangement, but was in a state of disorder which strongly induced the idea that he had gone to bed in it. It consisted of a brown body coat with a great many brass buttons up the front and only one behind, a bright check handkerchief, a plaid waistcoat, soiled white trousers, and a very limp hat, worn with the wrong side foremost, to hide a hole in the brim. The breast of his coat was ornamented with an outside pocket from which there peeped forth the cleanest end of a very ill-favoured handkerchief; his dirty wristbands were pulled down as far as possible and ostentatiously folded back over his cuffs; he displayed no gloves, and carried a yellow cane having at the top a bone band with the semblance of a ring on its little finger and a black ball in its grasp. With all these personal advantages (to which may be added a strong savour of tobacco-smoke, and a prevailing greasiness of appearance), Mr. Swiveller leant back in his chair with his eyes fixed on the ceiling, and occasionally pitching his voice to the needful key, obliged the company with a few bars of an intensely dismal air, and then, in the middle of a note, relapsed into his former silence.

The old man sat himself down in a chair, and, with folded hands, looked sometimes at his grand-son and sometimes at his strange companion, as if he were utterly powerless, and had no resource but to leave them to do as they pleased. The young man reclined against a table at no great distance from his friend, in apparent indifference to every thing that had passed; and I—who felt the difficulty of any interference, notwithstanding that the old man had appealed to me, both by words and looks—made the best feint I could of being occupied in examining some of the goods that were disposed for sale, and paying very little attention to the persons before me.

The silence was not of long duration, for Mr. Swiveller, after favouring us with several melodious assurances that his heart was in the highlands, and that he wanted but his Arab steed, as a preliminary to the achievement

of great feats of valour and loyalty, removed his eyes from the ceiling and subsided into prose again.

"Fred," said Mr. Swiveller, stopping short as if the idea had suddenly occurred to him, and speaking in the same audible whisper as before, "is the old man friendly?"

"What does it matter?" returned his friend, peevishly.

"No, but is he?" said Dick.

"Yes, of course. What do I care whether he is or not?"

Emboldened as it seemed by this reply to enter into a more general conversation, Mr. Swiveller plainly laid himself out to captivate our attention.

He began by remarking that soda water, though a good thing in the abstract, was apt to lie cold upon the stomach unless qualified with ginger or a small effusion of brandy, which latter article he held to be preferable in all cases, saving for the one consideration of expense. Nobody venturing to dispute these positions, he proceeded to observe that the human hair was a great retainer of tobacco-smoke, and that the young gentlemen of Westminster and Eton, after eating a vast quantity of apples to conceal any scent of cigars from their anxious friends, were usually detected in consequence of their heads possessing this remarkable property; whence he concludes that if the royal society would turn their attention to the circumstance, and endeavour to find in the resources of science a means of preventing such untoward revelations, they might indeed be looked upon as benefactors to mankind. These opinions being incontrovertible with those he had already pronounced, he went on to inform us that Jamaica rum, though unquestionably an agreeable spirit of great richness and flavour, had the drawback of remaining constantly present to the taste next day; and nobody being venturesome enough to argue this point either, he increased in confidence and became yet more companionable and communicative.

"It's a devil of a thing, gentlemen," said Mr. Swiveller,—"when relations fall out and disagree. If the wing of friendship should never moult a feather, the wing of relationship should never be clipped, but be always expanded and serene. Why should a grandson and grandfather peg away at each other with mutual violence when all might be bliss and concord? Why not jine hands and forgit it?"

"Hold your tongue," said his friend.

"Sir," replied Mr. Swiveller, "don't you interrupt the chair. Gentlemen, how does the case stand, upon the present occasion? Here is a jolly old grandfather—I say it with the utmost respect—and here is a wild young grandson. The jolly old grandfather says to the wild young grandson, 'I have brought you up and educated you, Fred; I have put you in the way of getting on in life; you have bolted a little out of the course as young fellows often do; and you shall never have another chance, nor the ghost of half a one.' The wild young grandson makes answer to this and says, 'You're as rich as rich can be; you have been at no uncommon expense on my account, you're saving up piles of money for my little sister that lives with you in a secret, stealthy, higger-mugger kind of way, and with no manner of enjoyment—why can't you stand a trifle for your grown-up relation?' The jolly old grandfather unto this, retorts, not only that he declines to fork out with that cheerful readiness which is always so agreeable and pleasant in a gentleman of his time of life, but that he will blow up, and call names, and make reflections whenever they meet.

Then, the plain question is, an't it a pity that this state of things should continue, and how much better would it be for the old gentleman to hand over a reasonable amount of tin, and make it all right and comfortable?"

Having delivered this oration with a great many waves and flourishes of the hand, Mr. Swiveller abruptly thrust the head of his cane into his mouth as if to prevent himself from impairing the effect of his speech by adding one other word.

"Why do you hunt and persecute me, God help me!" said the old man turning to his grandson. "Why do you bring your profligate companions here? How often am I to tell you that my life is one of care and self-denial, and that I am poor?"

"How often am I to tell you," returned the other, looking coldly at him, "that I know better?"

"You have chosen your own path," said the old man. "Follow it. Leave Nell and I to toil and work."

"Nell will be a woman soon," returned the other, "and bred in your faith, she'll forget her brother unless he shows himself sometimes."

"Take care," said the old man with sparkling eyes, "that she does not forget you when you would have her memory keenest. Take care that the day don't come when you walk barefoot in the streets, and she rides by in a gay carriage of her own."

"You mean when she has your money?" retorted the other. "How like a poor man he talks!"

"And yet," said the old man dropping his voice and speaking like one who thinks aloud, "how poor we are, and what a life it is! The cause is a young child's, guileless of all harm or wrong, but nothing goes well with it! Hope and patience, and hope and patience!"

These words were uttered in too low a tone to reach the ears of the young man. Mr. Swiveller appeared to think that they implied some mental struggle consequent upon the powerful effect of his address, for he poked his friend with his cane and whispered his conviction that he had administered "a clincher," and that he expected a commission on the profits. Discovering his mistake after a while, he appeared to grow rather sleepy and discontented, and had more than once suggested the propriety of an immediate departure, when the door opened, and the child herself appeared.

## THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

### CHAPTER III.

The child was closely followed by an elderly man of remarkably hard features and forbidding aspect, and so low in stature as to be quite a dwarf, though his head and face were large enough for the body of a giant. His black eyes were restless, sly, and cunning; his mouth and chin, bristly with the stubble of a coarse hard beard; his complexion was one of that kind which never looks clean or wholesome. But what added most to the grotesque expression of his face, was a ghastly smile, which, appearing to be the mere result of habit and to have no connection with any mirthful or complacent feeling, constantly revealed the few discoloured fangs that were yet scattered in his mouth, and gave him the aspect of a panting dog. His dress consisted of a large high-crowned hat, a worn dark suit, a pair of capacious shoes, and a dirty white neckerchief sufficiently limp and crumpled to disclose the greater portion of his wiry throat. Such

hair as he had, was of a grizzled black, cut short and straight upon his temples, and hanging in a frowy fringe about his ears. His hands, which were of a rough coarse grain, were very dirty; his finger-nails were crooked, long, and yellow.

There was ample time to note these particulars, for besides that they were sufficiently obvious without very close observations, some moments elapsed before any one broke silence. The child advanced timidly towards her brother and put her hand in his, the dwarf (if we may call him so) glanced keenly at all present, and the curiosity-dealer, who plainly had not expected his uncouth visitor, seemed disconcerted and embarrassed.

"Ah!" said the dwarf, who with his hand stretched out above his eye had been surveying the young man attentively, "that should be your grandson, neighbour!"

"Say rather that he should not be," replied the old man. "But he is."

"And that!" said the dwarf, pointing to Dick Swiveller.

"Some friend of his, as welcome here as he," said the old man.

"And that!" inquired the dwarf, wheeling round and pointing straight at me.

"A gentleman who was so good as to bring Nell home the other night when she lost her way, coming from your house."

The little man turned to the child as if to chide her or express his wonder, but as she was talking to the young man, held his peace, and bent his head to listen.

"Well, Nelly," said the young fellow aloud, "do they teach you to hate me, eh?"

"No, no. For shame. Oh, no!" cried the child.

"To love perhaps!" pursued her brother with a sneer.

"To do neither," she returned. "They never speak to me about you. Indeed they never do."

"I dare be bound for that," he said, darting a bitter look at the grandfather. "I dare be bound for that, Nell. Oh! I believe you there!"

"But I love you dearly, Fred," said the child.

"No doubt!"

"I do indeed, and always will," the child repeated with great emotion, "but, oh! if you would leave off vexing him and making him unhappy, then I could love you more."

"I see!" said the young man, as he stooped carelessly over the child, and having kissed her, pushed her from him: "There—get you away now you have said your lesson. You needn't whimper. We part good friends enough, if that's the matter."

He remained silent, following her with his eyes, until she had gained her little room and closed the door; and then turning to the dwarf, said abruptly,

"Harkce, Mr.—"

"Meaning me!" returned the dwarf. "Quilp is my name. You might remember. It's not a long one—Daniel Quilp."

"Harkce, Mr. Quilp, then," pursued the other. "You have some influence with my grandfather there."

"Some," said Mr. Quilp emphatically.

"And are in a few of his mysteries and secrets."

"A few," replied Quilp, with equal dryness.

"Then let me tell him once for all, through you, that I will come into and go out of this place as often as I like, so long as he keeps Nell here; and that if he wants to be quit of me, he must first be quit of her. What have I done to be made a bugbear of, and to be shunned

and dreaded as if I brought the plague? He'll tell you that I have no natural affection; and that I care no more for Nell, for her own sake, than I do for him. Let him say so. I care for the whim, then, of coming to and fro and reminding her of my existence. I will see her when I please. That's my point. I came here to-day to maintain it, and I'll come here again fifty times with the same object and with the same success. I said I would not stop till I had gained it. I have done so, and now my visit's ended. Come, Dick."

"Stop!" cried Mr. Swiveller, as his companion turned towards the door. "Sir!"

"Sir, I am your humble servant," said Mr. Quilp, to whom the monosyllable was addressed.

"Before I leave the gay and festive scene, and halls of dazzling light, sir," said Mr. Swiveller. "I will, with your permission, attempt a slight remark. I came here, sir, this day, under the impression that the old man was friendly."

"Proceed, sir," said Daniel Quilp; for the orator had made a sudden stop.

"Inspired by this idea and the sentiments it awakened, sir, and feeling as a mutual friend that badgering, baiting, and bullying, was not the sort of thing calculated to expand the souls and promote the social harmony of the contending parties, I took upon myself to suggest a course which is the course to be adopted on the present occasion. Will you allow me to whisper half a syllable, sir?"

Without waiting for the permission he sought, Mr. Swiveller stepped up to the dwarf, and leaning on his shoulder and stooping down to get at his ear, said in a voice which was perfectly audible to all present,

"The watch-word to the old man is—fork."

"Is what?" demanded Quilp.

"Is fork, sir," replied Mr. Swiveller, slapping his pocket. "You are awake, sir!"

The dwarf nodded. Mr. Swiveller drew back and nodded likewise, then drew a little further back and nodded again, and so on. By these means he in time reached the door, where he gave a great cough to attract the dwarf's attention, and gain an opportunity of expressing in dumb show the closest confidence and most inviolable secrecy. Having performed the serious pantomime that was necessary for the due conveyance of these ideas, he cast himself upon his friend's track, and vanished.

"Humph!" said the dwarf with a sour look and a shrug of his shoulders, "so much for dear relations. Thank God I acknowledge none! Nor need you either," he added, turning to the old man, "if you were not as weak as a reed, and nearly as senseless."

"What would you have me do?" he retorted in a kind of helpless desperation. "It is easy to talk and sneer. What would you have me do?"

"What would I do if I was in your case?" said the dwarf.

"Something violent, no doubt."

"You're right there," returned the little man, highly gratified by the compliment, for such he evidently considered it; and grinning like a devil as he rubbed his dirty hands together. "Ask Mrs. Quilp, pretty Mrs. Quilp, obedient, timid, loving Mrs. Quilp. But that reminds me—I have left her all alone, and she will be anxious and know not a moment's peace till I return. I know she's always in that condition when I'm away, though she doesn't dare say so, unless I lead her on and

tell her she may speak freely and I won't be angry with her. Oh! well-trained Mrs. Quilp!"

The creature appeared quite horrible with his monstrous head and little body, as he rubbed his hands slowly round, and round, and round again—with something fantastic even in his manner of performing this slight action—and, dropping his shaggy brows and cocking his chin in the air, glanced upward with a stealthy look of exultation that an imp might have copied and appropriated to himself.

"Here," he said, putting his hand into his breast, and sidling up to the old man as he spoke; "I brought it myself for fear of accidents, as being in gold, it was something large and heavy for Nell to carry in her bag. She need be accustomed to such loads betimes though, neighbour, for she will carry weight when you are dead."

"Heaven send she may! I hope so," said the old man with something like a groan.

"Hope so!" echoed the dwarf, approaching close to his ear; "neighbour, I would I knew in what good investment all these supplies are sunk. But you are a deep man, and keep your secret close."

"My secret!" said the other with a haggard look.—"Yes, you're right—I—I—keep it close—very close."

He said no more, but taking the money turned away with a slow uncertain step, and pressed his hand upon his head like a weary and dejected man. The dwarf watched him sharply, while he passed into the little sitting-room and locked it an iron safe above the chimney-piece; and after musing for a short space, prepared to take his leave, observing that unless he made good haste, Mrs. Quilp would certainly be in fits on his return.

"And so, neighbour," he added, "I'll turn my face homewards, leaving my love for Nelly, and hoping she may never lose her way again, though her doing so has procured me an honour I didn't expect." With that he bowed and leered at me, and with a keen glance around which seemed to comprehend every object within his range of vision, however small or trivial, went his way.

I had several times essayed to go myself, but the old man had always opposed it and entreated me to remain. As he renewed his entreaties on our being left alone, and adverted with my thanks to the former occasion of our being together, I willingly yielded to his persuasions, and sat down, pretending to examine some curious miniatures and a few old medals which he placed before me. It needed no great pressing to induce me to stay, for if my curiosity had been excited on the occasion of my first visit, it certainly was not diminished now.

Nell joined us before long, and bringing some needle-work to the table sat by the old man's side. It was pleasant to observe the fresh flowers in the room, the pet bird with a green bough shading his little cage, the breath of freshness and youth which seemed to rustle through the old dull house and hover round the child. It was curious, but not so pleasant, to turn from the beauty and grace of the girl, to the stooping figure, careworn face, and jaded aspect of the old man. As he grew weaker and more feeble, what would become of this lonely little creature—poor protector as he was—say that he died—what would her fate be then?

The old man almost answered my thoughts, as he laid his hand on hers, and spoke aloud.

"I'll be of better cheer, Nell," he said; "there must be good fortune in store for thee—I do not ask it for myself, but thee. Such miseries must fall on thy innocent

head without it, that I cannot believe but that, being tempted, it will come at last!"

She looked cheerfully into his face, but made no answer.

"When I think," said he, "of the many years—many in thy short life—that thou hast lived alone with me; of thy monotonous existence, knowing no companions of thy own age nor any childish pleasures; of the solitude in which thou hast grown to be what thou art, and in which thou hast lived apart from nearly all thy kind but one old man; I sometimes fear I have dealt hardly by thee, Nell."

"Grandfather!" cried the child in unfeigned surprise.

"Not in intention—no, no," said he. "I have ever looked forward to the time that should enable thee to mix among the gayest and prettiest, and take thy station with the best. But I still look forward, Nell, I still look forward, and if I should be forced to leave thee, meanwhile how have I fitted thee for struggles with the world! The poor bird yonder is as well qualified to encounter it, and be turned adrift upon its mercies—hark! I hear Kit outside. Go to him, Nell, go to him."

She rose, and hurrying away, stopped, turned back, and put her arms about the old man's neck, then left him and hurried away again—but faster this time, to hide her falling tears.

"A word in your ear, sir," said the old man in a hurried whisper. "I have been rendered uneasy by what you said the other night, and can only plead that I have done all for the best—that it is too late to retract, if I could (though I cannot)—and that I hope to triumph yet. All is for her sake. I have borne great poverty myself, and would spare her the sufferings that poverty carries with it. I would spare her the miseries that brought her mother, my own dear child, to an early grave. I would leave her—not with resources which could be easily spent or squandered away, but with what would place her beyond the reach of want for ever. You mark me, sir? She shall have, no pittance, but fortune—hush! I can say no more than that, now or at any other time, and she is here again!"

The eagerness with which all this was poured into my ear, the trembling of the hand with which he clasped my arm, the strained and starting eyes he fixed upon me, the wild vehemence and agitation of his manner, filled me with amazement. All that I had heard and seen, and a great part of what he said himself, led me to suppose he was a wealthy man. I could form no comprehension of his character, unless he were one of those miserable wretches who have made gain the sole end and object of their lives, and having succeeded in amassing great riches, are constantly tortured by the dread of poverty, and beset by fears of loss and ruin. Many things he had said, which I had been at a loss to understand, were quite reconcilable with the idea thus presented to me, and at length I concluded that beyond all doubt he was one of this unhappy race.

The opinion was not the result of hasty consideration, for which indeed there was no opportunity at that time, as the child came back directly, and soon occupied herself in preparations for giving Kit a writing lesson, of which it seemed he had a couple every week, and one regularly on that evening, to the great mirth and enjoyment both of himself and his instructress. To relate how it was a long time before his modesty could be so far prevailed upon as to admit of his sitting down in the parlour, in the presence of an unknown gentleman—how when he did sit down he tucked up his sleeves and



squared his elbows, and put his face close to the copy-book, and squinted horribly at the lines—how from the very first moment of having the pen in his hand, he began to wallow in blots, and to daub himself with ink up to the very roots of his hair—how if he did by accident form a letter properly, he immediately smeared it out again with his preparations to make another—how at every fresh mistake, there was a fresh burst of merriment from the child, and a louder and not less hearty laugh from poor Kit himself—and how there was all the way through, notwithstanding, a gentle wish on her part to teach, and an anxious desire on his to learn—to relate all these particulars would, no doubt, occupy more space and time than they deserve. It will be sufficient to say that the lesson was given—that evening passed and night came on—that the old man again grew restless and impatient—that he quitted the house secretly at the same hour as before—and that the child was once more left alone within its gloomy walls.

And now that I have carried this history so far in my own character, and introduced these personages to the reader, I shall, for the convenience of the narrative, detach myself from its further course, and leave those who have prominent and necessary parts in it to speak and act for themselves.

## CHAPTER IV.

Mr. and Mrs. Quilp resided on Tower Hill; and in her bower on Tower Hill Mrs. Quilp was left to pine the absence of her lord, when he quitted her on the business which he has been already seen to transact.

Mr. Quilp could scarcely be said to be of any particular trade and calling, though his pursuits were diversified and his occupations numerous. He collected the rents of whole colonies of filthy streets and alleys by the water-side, advanced money to the seamen and petty officers of merchant vessels, had a share in the ventures of divers mates of East Indiamen, smoked his smuggled cigars under the very nose of the custom house, and made appointments on Change with men in glazed hats and round jackets pretty well every day. On the Surrey side of the river was a small rat-infested, dreary yard, called "Quilp's Wharf," in which were a little wooden counting-house burrowing all awry in the dust, as if it had fallen from the clouds and ploughed into the ground; a few fragments of rusty anchors; several large iron rings; some piles of rotten wood; and two or three heaps of sheet copper, crumpled, cracked, and battered. On Quilp's Wharf, Daniel Quilp was a ship-broker, yet to judge from these appearances he must either have been a ship-broker on a very small scale, or have broken his ships up very small indeed. Neither did the place present any extraordinary aspect of life or activity, as its only human occupant was an amphibious boy in a canvass suit, whose sole change of occupation was from sitting on the head of a pile and throwing stones into the mud when the tide was out, to stand with his hands in his pockets gazing listlessly on the motion and on the bustle of the river at high water.

The dwarf's lodging on Tower Hill comprised, besides the needful accommodation for himself and Mrs. Quilp, a small sleeping-closet for that lady's mother, who resided with the couple and waged perpetual war with Daniel; of whom, notwithstanding, she stood in no slight dread. Indeed, the ugly creature contrived by some means or other—whether by his ugliness or his fecocity

or natural cunning, is no great matter, to impress with a wholesome fear of his anger, most of those with whom he was brought into daily contact and communication. Over nobody had he such complete ascendancy as Mrs. Quilp herself—a pretty little, mild-spoken, blue-eyed woman, who having allied herself in wedlock to the dwarf in one of those strange infatuations of which examples are by no means scarce, performed a sound practical penance for her folly, every day of her life.

It has been said that Mrs. Quilp was pining in her bower. In her bower she was, but not alone, for besides the old lady her mother, of whom mention has recently been made, there were present some half dozen ladies of the neighbourhood, who had happened by a strange accident (and also by a little understanding among themselves) to drop in one after another, just about tea time. This being a season favourable to conversation, and the room being a cool, shady, lazy kind of place, with some plants at the open window shutting out the dust, and interposing pleasantly enough between the tea-table within and the old tower without, it is no wonder that the ladies felt an inclination to talk and linger, especially when there are taken into account the additional inducements of fresh butter, new bread, shrimps, and water-cresses.

Now, the ladies being together under these circumstances, it was extremely natural that the discourse should turn upon the propensity of mankind to tyrannies over the weaker sex, and the duty that devolved upon the weaker sex to resist that tyranny and assert their rights and dignity. It was natural for four reasons; first, because Mrs. Quilp being a young woman and notoriously under the dominion of her husband, ought to be excited to rebel; secondly, because Mrs. Quilp's parent was known to be laudably shrewish in her disposition, and inclined to resist male authority; thirdly, because each visitor wished to show for herself how superior she was in this respect to the generality of her sex; and, fourthly, because the company being accustomed to scandalise each other in pairs, were deprived of their usual subject of conversation now that they were all assembled in close friendship, and had consequently no better employment than to attack the common enemy.

Moved by these considerations, a stout lady opened the proceedings by inquiring, with an air of great concern and sympathy, how Mr. Quilp was; whereupon Mr. Quilp's wife's mother replied sharply, "Oh! he was well enough—nothing much was ever the matter with him—and ill weeds were sure to thrive." All the ladies then sighed in concert, shook their heads gravely, and looked at Mrs. Quilp as at a martyr.

"Ah!" said the spokesman, "I wish you'd give her a little of your advice, Mrs. Jiniwin." Mrs. Quilp had been a Miss Jiniwin it should be observed—"Nobody knows better than you, ma'am, what us women owe to ourselves."

"Owe indeed, ma'am!" replied Mrs. Jiniwin. "When my poor husband, her dear father, was alive, if he had ever ventured a cross word to me, I'd have—" the good old lady did not finish the sentence, but she twisted off the head of a shrimp with a vindictiveness which seemed to imply that the action was in some degree a substitute for words. In this light it was clearly understood by the other party, who immediately replied, with great approbation; "You quite enter into my feelings, ma'am, and it's just what I'd do myself."

"But you have no call to do it," said Mrs. Jiniwin. "Luckily for you, you have no more occasion to do it than I had."

"No woman need have, if she was true to herself," rejoined the stout lady.

"Do you hear that, Betsy?" said Mrs. Jiniwin, in a warning voice. "How often have I said the very same words to you, and almost gone down on my knees when I spoke 'em!"

Poor Mrs. Quilp, who had looked in a state of helplessness from one face of condolence to another, coloured, smiled, and shook her head doubtfully. This was the signal for a general clamour, which beginning in a low murmur gradually swelled into a great noise, in which every body spoke at once, and all said that she being a young woman had no right to set up her opinions against the experience of those who knew so much better; that it was very wrong of her not to take the advice of people who had nothing at heart but her good; that it was next door to being downright ungrateful to conduct herself in that manner; that if she had no respect for herself, she ought to have some for other women, all of whom she compromised by her meekness; and that if she had no respect for other women, the time would come when other women would have no respect for her, and she would be very sorry for that, they could tell her. Having dealt out these admonitions, the ladies fell to a more powerful assault than they had yet made upon the mixed tea, new bread, fresh butter, shrimps and water-cresses, and said their vexation was so great to see her going on like that, that they could hardly bring themselves to eat a single morsel.

"It's all very fine talk," said Mrs. Quilp, with much simplicity, "but I know that if I was to die to-morrow, Quilp could marry any body he pleased—now that he could, I know!"

There was quite a scream of indignation at this idea. Marry whom he pleased! They would like to see him dare to think of marrying any of them; they would like to see the faintest approach to such a thing. One lady (a widow) was quite certain she should stab him if he hinted at it.

"Very well," said Mrs. Quilp, nodding her head, "as I said just now, it's very easy to talk, but I again say that I know—that I'm sure—Quilp has such a way with him when he likes, that the best looking woman here couldn't refuse him if I was dead, and she was free, and he chose to make love to her. Come!"

Every one bridled up at this remark, as much as to say, "I know you mean me. Let him try—that's all." And yet for some hidden reason they were all angry with the widow, and each lady whispered in her neighbour's ear, that it was very plain the said widow thought herself the person referred to, and what a puss she was!

"Mother knows," said Mrs. Quilp, "that what I say is quite correct, for she often said so before we were married. Didn't you say so, mother?"

This inquiry involved the respected lady in rather a delicate position, for she certainly had been active in making her daughter Mrs. Quilp; and, besides, it was not supporting the family credit to encourage the idea that she had married a man whom nobody else would have. On the other hand, to exaggerate the captivating qualities of her son-in-law would be to weaken the cause of revolt, in which all her energies were deeply engaged. Beset by these opposing considerations, Mrs. Jiniwin admitted the powers of insinuation, but denied the right to govern, and with a timely compliment to the stout lady brought back the discussion to the point from which it had strayed.

"Oh! it's a sensible and proper thing indeed, what

Mrs. George has said!" exclaimed the old lady. "If women are only true to themselves!—But Betsy isn't, and more's the shame and pity."

"Before I'd let a man order me about as Quip orders her," said Mrs. George; "before I'd consent to stand in awe of a man as she does of him, I'd—I'd kill myself, kill myself, and write a letter first to say he did it!"

This remark being loudly commended and approved of, another lady (from the Minorities) put in her word:

"Mr. Quilp may be a very nice man," said this lady, "and I suppose there's no doubt he is, because Mrs. Quilp says he is, and Mrs. Jiniwin says he is, and they ought to know, or nobody does. But still he is not quite a—what one calls a handsome man, nor quite a young man neither, which might be a little excuse for him if any thing could be; whereas his wife is young, and is good looking, and is a woman—which is the great thing after all."

This last clause being delivered with extraordinary pathos, elicited a corresponding murmur from the hearers, stimulated by which the lady went on to remark, that if such a husband was cross and unreasonable with such a wife, then—

"If he is!" interposed the mother, putting down her tea-cup and brushing the crumbs out of her lap, preparatory to making a solemn declaration. "If he is! he is the greatest tyrant that ever lived, she daren't call her soul her own, he makes her tremble with a word, and even with a look he frightens her to death, and she hasn't the spirit to give him a word back, no, not a single word."

Notwithstanding that the fact had been notorious beforehand to all the tea-drinkers, and had been discussed and expatiated on at every tea-drinking in the neighbourhood for the last twelve months, this official communication was no sooner made than they all began to talk at once, and to vie with each other in vehemence and volubility. Mrs. George remarked, that people would talk, that people had often said this to her before, that Mrs. Simmons then and there present had told her so twenty times, that she had always said, "No, Henrietta Simmons, unless I see it with my own eyes and hear it with my own ears, I never will believe it." Mrs. Simmons corroborated this testimony, and added strong evidence of her own. The lady from the Minorities recounted a successful course of treatment under which she had placed her own husband, who, from manifesting one month after marriage unequivocal symptoms of the tiger, had by this means become subdued into a perfect lamb. Another lady recounted her own personal struggle and final triumph, in the course whereof she had found it necessary to call in her mother and two aunts, and to weep incessantly night and day for six weeks. A third, who in the general confusion could secure no other listener, fastened herself upon a young woman still unmarried, who happened to be amongst them, and conjured her as she valued her own peace of mind and happiness, to profit by this solemn occasion, to take example from the weakness of Mrs. Quilp, and from that time forth to direct her whole thoughts to taming and subduing the rebellious spirit of man. The noise was at its height, and half the company had elevated their voices into a perfect shriek in order to drown the voices of the other half, when Mrs. Jiniwin was seen to change colour and shake her fore-finger stealthily, as if exhorting them to silence. Then, and not till then, Daniel Quilp himself, the cause and occasion of all this clamour, was observed

to be in the room, looking on and listening with profound attention.

"Go on, ladies, go on," said Daniel. "Mrs. Quilp, pray ask the ladies to stop to supper, and have a couple of lobsters and something light and palatable."

"I—I—didn't ask them to tea, Quilp," stammered his wife. "It's quite an accident."

"So much the better, Mrs. Quilp; these accidental parties are always the pleasantest," said the dwarf, rubbing his hands so hard that he seemed to be engaged in manufacturing, of the dirt with which they were incrustated, little charges for popguns. "What! Not going, ladies, you are not going, surely!"

His fair enemies tossed their heads slightly as they sought their respective bonnets and shawls, but left all verbal contention to Mrs. Jiniwin, who, finding herself in the position of champion, made a faint struggle to sustain the character.

"And why not stop to supper, Quilp," said the old lady, "if my daughter had a mind?"

"To be sure," rejoined Daniel—"why not?"

"There's nothing dishonest or wrong in a supper, I hope," said Mrs. Jiniwin.

"Surely not," returned the dwarf. "Why should there be? Nor any thing unwholesome either, unless there's lobster salad or prawns, which I'm told are not good for digestion."

"And you would not like *your* wife to be attacked with that, or any thing else that would make her uneasy, would you?" said Mrs. Jiniwin.

"Not for a score of worlds," replied the dwarf, with a grin. "Not even to have a score of mothers-in-law at the same time—and what a blessing that would be!"

"My daughter's your wife, Mr. Quilp, certainly," said the old lady, with a giggle, meant for satirical, and to imply that he needed to be reminded of the fact; "your wedded wife."

"So she is, certainly, so she is," observed the dwarf.

"And she has a right to do as she likes, I hope, Quilp," said the old lady, trembling, partly with anger and partly with a secret fear of her impish son-in-law.

"Hope she has," he replied. "Oh, don't you know, she has! Don't you know she has, Mrs. Jiniwin?"

"I know she ought to have, Quilp, and would have, if she was of my way of thinking."

"Why an't you of your mother's way of thinking, my dear?" said the dwarf, turning round and addressing his wife, "why don't you always imitate your mother, my dear! She's the ornament of your sex—your father said so every day of his life, I am sure he did."

"Her father was a blessed creature, Quilp, and worth twenty thousand of some people," said Mrs. Jiniwin; "twenty hundred million thousand."

"I should like to have known him," remarked the dwarf. "I dare say he was a blessed creature then; but I'm sure he is now. It was a happy release, I believe he had suffered a long time!"

The old lady gave a gasp, but nothing came of it; Quilp resumed, with the same malice in his eye and the same sarcastic smile on his tongue.

"You look ill, Mrs. Jiniwin; I know you have been exciting yourself too much—talking perhaps, for it is your weakness. Go to bed. Do go to bed."

"I shall go when I please, Quilp, and not before."

"But please to go now. Do please to go now," said the dwarf.

The old woman looked angrily at him, but retreated as he advanced, and falling back before him, suffered him

to shut the door upon her and bolt her out among the guests, who were by this time crowding down stairs.—Being left alone with his wife, who sat trembling in a corner, with her eyes fixed upon the ground, the little man planted himself before her, and folding his arms, looked steadily at her for some time without speaking.

"Mrs. Quilp," he said, at last.

"Yes, Quilp," she replied, meekly.

Instead of pursuing the theme he had in his mind, Quilp folded his arms again, and looked at her more sternly than before, while she averted her eyes and kept them on the ground.

"Mrs. Quilp."

"Yes, Quilp."

"If ever you listen to these beldames again, I'll bite you."

With this laconic threat, which he accompanied with a snarl that gave him the appearance of being particularly in earnest, Mr. Quilp bade her clear the tea-board away, and bring the rum. The spirit being set before him in a huge case-bottle, which had originally come out of some ship's locker, he ordered cold water and the box of cigars; and these being supplied, he settled himself in an arm-chair, with his large head and face squeezed up against the back, and his legs planted on the table.

"Now, Mrs. Quilp," he said, "I feel in a smoking humour, and shall probably blaze away all night; but sit where you are, if you please, in case I want you."

His wife returned no other reply than the customary "Yes, Quilp," and the same lord of the creation took his first cigar, and mixed his first glass of grog. The sun went down and the stars peeped out, the Tower turned from its own proper colour to gray and from gray to black, the room became perfectly dark, and the end of the cigar a deep fiery red; but still Mr. Quilp went on smoking and drinking in the same position, and staring listlessly out of the window, with the dog-like smile always on his face, save when Mrs. Quilp made some involuntary movement of restlessness of fatigue, and then it expanded into a grin of delight.

#### MR. WELLER'S WATCH.

It seems that the house-keeper and the two Mr. Wellers were no sooner left together on the occasion of their first becoming acquainted, than the house-keeper called to her assistance Mr. Slithers the barber, who had been lurking in the kitchen in expectation of her summons; and with many smiles and much sweetness introduced him as one who would assist her in the responsible office of entertaining her distinguished visitors.

"Indeed," said she, "without Mr. Slithers, I should have been placed in quite an awkward situation."

"There is no call for any hock'erdness, mum," said Mr. Weller with the utmost politeness; "no call wotsoever. A lady," added the old gentleman, looking about him with the air of one who establishes an incontrovertible position, "a lady can't be hock'erd. Natur has otherwise purwided."

The house-keeper inclined her head and smiled yet more sweetly. The barber, who had been fluttering about Mr. Weller and Sam in a state of great anxiety to improve their acquaintance, rubbed his hands and cried, "Hear! hear! Very true, sir;" whereupon Sam turned



about and steadily regarded him for some seconds in silence.

"I never knew," said Sam, fixing his eyes in a ruminative manner upon the blushing barber, "I never knew but vun o' your trade, but *he* was worth a dozen and was indeed dewoted to his callin'!"

"Was he in the easy shaving way, sir," inquired Mr. Slithers: "or in the cutting and curling line?"

"Both," replied Sam; "easy shavin' was his natur, and cuttin' and curlin' was his pride and glory. His whole delight was in his trade. He spent all his money in bears and run in debt for 'em besides, and there they was a growling away down in the front cellar all day long, and ineffectually gnashing their teeth, vile the grease o' their relations and friends was being retailed in gallipots in the above shop, and the first floor winder was ornamented with their heads; not to speak of the dreadful aggravation it must have been to 'em to see a man walking up and down the pavement on the outside, with the portrait of a bear in his last agonies, and underneath in large letters, 'Another fine animal was slaughtered yesterday at Jinkinson's!' Hows'ever, there they was, and there Jinkinson was, till he was took werry ill with some inn'ard disorder, lost the use of his legs, and was confined to his bed vere he laid a wery long time, but sich was his pride in his profession even then, that wenever he wot worse than usual the doctor used to go down stairs and say 'Jinkinson's wery low this mornin'; we must give the bears a stir'; and as sure as ever they stirred 'em up a bit and made 'em roar, Jinkinson opens his eyes as if he was ever so bad, calls out 'There's the bears!' and revives agin."

"Astonishing!" cried the barber.

"Not a bit," said Sam, "human natur' neat as imparted. Vun day the doctor happenin' to say 'I shall look in as usual to-morrow mornin', Jinkinson catches hold of his hand and says, 'doctor,' he says, 'will you grant me one favour?' 'I will, Jinkinson,' says the doctor. 'Then, doctor,' says Jinkinson, 'will you come unshaved, and let me shave you?' 'I will,' says the doctor. 'God bless you,' says Jinkinson. Next day the doctor came, and arter he'd been shaved all skilful and reg'lar, he says, 'Jinkinson,' he says, 'it's wery plain this does you good. 'Now,' he says, 'I've got a coachman as has got a beard that it 'ud warm your heart to work on, and though the footman,' he says, 'hasn't got much of a beard, still he's a trying it on with a pair o' viskers to that extent that razors is Christian charity. If they take it in turns to mind the carriage wen it's a waitin' below,' he says, 'wot's to hinder you from operatin' on both of 'em ev'ry day as well as upon me? you've got six children,' he says, 'wot's to hinder you from shavin' all their heads and keepin' 'em shaved! You've got two assistants in tife shop down stairs, wot's to hinder you from cuttin' and curlin' them as often as you like! Do this,' he says, 'and you're a man agin.' Jinkinson squeezed the doctor's hand and begun that very day; he kept his tools upon his bed, and wenever he felt his-self gettin' worse, he turned to at vun o' the children who was a runnin' about the house with heads like clean Dutch cheeses, and shaved him agin. Vun day the lawyer cum to make his vill; all the time he was a takin' it down, Jinkinson was secretly clippin' away at his hair with a large pair of scissors. 'Wot's that 'ere snippin' noise?' says the lawyer every now and then, 'it's like a man havin' his hair cut.' 'It is wery like a man havin' his hair cut,' says poor Jinkinson, hidin' the scissors and lookin' quite innocent. By the time the lawyer found it out, he was wery nearly

bald. Jinkinson was kept alive in this way for a long time, but at last vun day he has in all the children vun arter another, shaves each on 'em wery clean, and gives him vun kiss on the crown of his head; then he has in the two assistants, and arter cuttin' and curlin' of 'em in the first style of elegance, says he should like to hear the voice o' the greasiest bear, vich rekvest is immedately complied with; then he says, that he feels wery happy in his mind, and vishes to be left alone; and then he dies, previously cuttin' his own hair and makin' one flat curl in the middle of his forehead."

This anecdote produced an extraordinary effect, not only upon Mr. Slithers but upon the house-keeper also, who evinced so much anxiety to please and to be pleased, that Mr. Weller, with a manner betokening some alarm, conveyed a whispered inquiry to his son whether he had gone "too fur."

"Wot do you mean by too fur?" demanded Sam.

"In that 'ere little compliment respectin' the want of hock'rdness in ladies, Sammy," replied his father.

"You don't think she's fallen in love with you in consequence o' that, do you?" said Sam.

"More unlikelier things have come to pass, my boy," replied Mr. Weller in a hoarse whisper; "I'm always asfeed of inadvertent captivation, Sammy. If I know'd how to make myself ugly or unpleasant I'd do it, Samivel, rayther than live in this here state of perpetual terror!"

Mr. Weller had at that time no further opportunity of dwelling upon the apprehensions which beset his mind, for the immediate occasion of his fears proceeded to lead the way down stairs, apologising as they went for conducting him into the kitchen, which apartment, however, she was induced to proffer for his accommodation in preference to her own little room, the rather as it afforded greater facilities for smoking, and was immediately adjoining the ale cellar. The preparations which were already made sufficiently proved that these were not mere words of course, for on the deal table were a sturdy ale jug and glasses, flanked with clean pipes and a plentiful supply of tobacco for the old gentleman and his son, while on a dresser hard by was a goodly store of cold meat and other eatables. At sight of these arrangements, Mr. Weller was at first distracted between his love of joviality and his doubts whether they were not to be considered as so many evidences of captivation having already taken place; but he soon yielded to his natural impulse, and took his seat at the table with a very jolly countenance.

"As to imbibin' any o' this here flagrant weed, mum, in the presence of a lady," said Mr. Weller, taking up a pipe and laying it down agin, "it couldn't be. Samivel, total abstinence, if you please."

"But I like it of all things," said the house-keeper.

"No," rejoined Mr. Weller, shaking his head. "No."

"Upon my word I do," said the house-keeper. "Mr. Slithers knows I do."

Mr. Weller coughed, and notwithstanding the barber's confirmation of the statement, said no again, but more feebly than before. The house-keeper lighted a piece of paper and insisted on applying it to the bowl of the pipe with her own fair hands; Mr. Weller resisted; the house-keeper cried that her fingers would be burnt; Mr. Weller gave way. The pipe was ignited, Mr. Weller drew a long puff of smoke, and detecting himself in the very act of smiling on the house-keeper, put a sudden constraint upon his countenance and looked sternly at the candle, with a determination not to captivate, himself,



or encourage thoughts of captivity in others. From this iron frame of mind he was roused by the voice of his son.

"I don't think," said Sam, who was smoking with great composure and enjoyment, "that if the lady was agreeable, it 'ud be very far out o' the way for us four to make up a club of our own like the governors does up stairs, and let him," Sam pointed with the stem of his pipe towards his parent, "be the president."

The house-keeper affably declared that it was the very thing she had been thinking of. The barber said the same. Mr. Weller said nothing, but he laid down his pipe as if in a fit of inspiration, and performed the following manoeuvres.

Unbuttoning the three lower buttons of his waistcoat, and pausing for a moment to enjoy the easy flow of breath consequent upon this process, he laid violent hands upon his watch-chain, and slowly and with extreme difficulty drew from his fob an immense double-cased silver watch, which brought the lining of the pocket with it, and was not to be disentangled but by great exertions and an amazing redness of face. Having fairly got it out at last, he detached the outer case, and wound it up with a key of corresponding magnitude, then put the case on again, and having applied the watch to his ear to ascertain that it was still going, gave it some half-dozen hard knocks on the table to improve its performance.

"That," said Mr. Weller, laying it on the table with its face upwards, "is the title and emblem o' this here society. Sammy, reach them two stools this way for the vacant ebeers. Ladies and gen'l'men, Mr. Weller's watch is wound up and now a goin'. Order!"

By way of enforcing this proclamation, Mr. Weller, using the watch after the manner of a president's hammer, and remarking with great pride that nothing hurt it, and that falls and concussion of all kinds materially enhanced the excellence of the works and assisted the regulator, knocked the table a great many times and declared the association formally constituted.

"And don't let's have no grinnin' at the cheer, Samivel," said Mr. Weller to his son, "or I shall be committin' you to the cellar, and then p'raps we may get into wot the 'Merrikins call a fix, and the English a question o' privileges."

Having uttered this friendly caution, the president settled himself in his chair with great dignity, and requested that Mr. Samuel would relate an anecdote.

"I've told one," said Sam.

"Wery good, sir; tell another," returned the chair.

"We was a talking jist now, sir," said Sam, turning to Slithers, "about barbers. Pursuing that 'ere fruitful theme, sir, I'll you in a wery few words a romantic little story about another barber, as p'raps you may never have heard."

"Samivel!" said Mr. Weller, again bringing his watch and the table into smart collision, "address your observations to the cheer, sir, and not to private individuals!"

"And if I might rise to order," said the barber in a soft voice, and looking round him with a conciliatory smile as he leant over the table with the knuckles of his left hand resting upon it, "if I might rise to order, I would suggest that 'barbers' is not exactly the kind of language which is agreeable and soothing to our feelings. You, sir, will correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe there is such a word in the dictionary as hair-dresser."

"Well, but suppose he wasn't a hair-dresser," suggested Sam.

"Vy, then, sir, be parliamentary, and call him vun all the more," returned his father. "In the same way as ev'ry gen'l'man in another place is a honourable, ev'ry barber in this place is a hair-dresser. Ven you read the speeches in the papers, and see as vun gen'l'man says of another, 'the honourable member, if he vill allow me to call him so,' you will understand sir, that that means, 'if he vill allow me to keep up that 'ere pleasant and universal fiction.'"

It is a common remark, confirmed by history and experience, that great men rise with the circumstances in which they are placed. Mr. Weller came out so strong in his capacity of chairman, that Sam was for some time prevented from speaking by a grin of surprise, which held his faculties enchained, and at last subsided in a long whistle of a single note. Nay, the old gentleman appeared even to have astonished himself, and that to no small extent, as was demonstrated by the vast amount of chuckling in which he indulged after the utterance of these lucid remarks.

"Here's the story," said Sam. "Vunce upon a time there was a young hair-dresser as opened a wery smart little shop with four wax dummies in the winder, two gen'l'men and two ladies—the gen'l'men with blue dots for their beards, wery large viskers, ou-dacious heads of hair, uncommon clear eyes, and nostrils of amazin' pinkness—the ladies with their heads o' one side, their right forefingers on their lips, and their forms dewloped beautiful, in vich last respect they had the advantage over the gen'l'men, as they wasn't allowed but wery little shoulder, and terminated rayther abrupt in fancy drapery. He had also many hair-brushes and tooth-brushes bottled up in the winder, neat glass-cases on the counter, a floor-clothed cuttin' room up stairs, and a weighen' macheen in the shop, right opposite the door; but the great attraction and ornament was the dummies, which this 'ere young hair-dresser was constantly a runnin' out in the road to look at, and constantly a runnin' in agin to touch up and polish; in short, he was so proud on 'em that ven Sunday come, he was always wretched and mis'rabile to think they was behind the shutters, and looked anxiously for Monday on that account. Vun o' these dummies was a fav'rite with him beyond the others, and ven any of his acquaintance asked him vy he didn't get married—as the young he know'd, in partickler, often did—he used to say, 'Never! I never vill enter into the bonds of vedlock,' he says, 'until I meet with a young 'ooman as realises my idea o' that 'ere fairest dummy with the light hair. Then, and not till then,' he says, 'vill I approach the altar!' All the young ladies he know'd as had got dark hair told him this was wery sinful, and that he was wurshippin' a idle; but them as was at all near the same shade as the dummy, coloured up wery much, and was observed to think him a wery nice young man."

"Samivel," said Mr. Weller, gravely, "a member o' this assosiashun bein' one o' that 'ere tender sex which is now immedety referred to, I have to rekvest that you will make no reflexions."

"I ain't a makin' any, am I?" inquired Sam.

"Order, sir!" rejoined Mr. Weller, with severe dignity; then sinking the chairman in the father, he added in his usual tone of voice, "Samivel, drive on!"

Sam interchanged a smile with the housekeeper, and proceeded:

"The young hair-dresser hadn't been in the habit o'

makin' this avowal above six months, ven he encountered a young lady as was the very picter o' the fairest dummy. 'Now,' he says, 'it's all up. I am a slave!' The young lady was not only the picter o' the fairest dummy, but she was very romantic as the young hair-dresser was too; and he says, 'Oh!' he says, 'here's a community o' feelin'—here's a flow o' soul,' he says, 'here's a interchange o' sentiment!' The young lady didn't say much o' course, but she expressed herself agreeable, and shortly arterwards vent to see him with a mutual friend. The hair-dresser rushes out to meet her, but d'rectly she sees the dummies, she changes colour and falls a tremblin' violently. 'Look up, my love,' says the hair-dresser; 'behold your imige in my winder, but not correcter than in my art!' 'My imige?' she says. 'Your'n!' replies the hair-dresser. 'But whose imige is that?' she says, a pinting at vun o' the gen'l'men. 'No vun's, my love,' he says, 'it's but a idea.' 'A idea?' says she, 'it's a portrait—I feel it's a portrait; and that ere noble face must be in the milingitary!' 'Wot do I hear?' says he, a crumplin' his curls. 'William Gibbs,' she says, quite firm, 'never renoo the subject. I respect you as a friend,' she says, 'but my affections is set upon that manly brow.' 'This,' says the hair-dresser, 'is a reg'lar blight, and in it I perceive the hand of Fate.—Farewell!' With these vords, he rushes into the shop, breaks the dummy's nose with a blow of his curlin' irons, melts him down at the parlour fire, and never smiles arterwards."

"The young lady, Mr. Weller?" said the housekeeper.

"Vy, ma'am," said Sam, "findin' that Fate had a spite agin her and every body she come into contact vith, she never smiled neither, but read a deal o' poetry and pined away—by rayther slow degrees, for she ain't dead yet. It took a deal o' poetry to kill the hair-dresser, and some people say arter all, that it was more the gin and water as caused him to be run over; p'raps it was a little o' both, and came o' mixing the two."

The barber declared that Mr. Weller had related one of the most interesting stories that had ever come within his knowledge, in which opinion the housekeeper entirely concurred.

"Are you a married man, sir?" inquired Sam.

The barber replied that he had not that honour.

"I s'pose you mean to be?" said Sam.

"Well," replied the barber, rubbing his hands smirkingly, "I don't know, I don't think it's very likely."

"That's a bad sign," said Sam; "if you'd said you meant to be vun o' these days, I should ha' looked upon you as bein' safe. You're in a very precarious state."

"I'm not conscious of any danger, at all events," returned the barber.

"No more was I, sir," said the elder Mr. Weller, interposing, "those were my symptoms exactly. I've been took that way twice. Keep your vether eye open, my friend, or you're gone."

There was something so very solemn about this admonition, both in its matter and manner, and also in the way which Mr. Weller still kept his eye fixed upon the unsuspecting victim, that nobody cared to speak for some little time, and mightn't have cared to do so for some time longer, if the housekeeper had not happened to sigh, which called off the old gentleman's attention, and gave rise to a gallant inquiry whether "there was anythin' wery piercin' in that 'ere little heart."

"Dear me, Mr. Weller!" said the housekeeper, laughing.

"No, but is there anythin' as agitates it?" pursued

the old gentleman. "Has it always been obderrate, always opposed to the happiness o' human creeturs? Eh? Has it?"

At this critical juncture for her blushes and confusion, the housekeeper discovered that more ale was wanted, and hastily withdrew into the cellar to draw the same, followed by the barber, who insisted on carrying the candle. Having looked after her with a very complacent expression of face, and after him with some disdain, Mr. Weller caused his glance to travel slowly round the kitchen, until at length it rested on his son.

"Sammy," said Mr. Weller, "I mistrust that barber."

"Wot for?" returned Sam; "wot's he got to do with you? You're a nice man, you are, arter pretendin' all kinds o' terror, to go a payin' compliments and talkin' about hearts and piercers!"

"Was I a talkin' about hearts and piercers? was I, though, Sammy, eh?"

"Was you! of course you was."

"She don't know no better, Sammy; there a'n't no harm in it, no danger, Sammy; she's only a punster. She seemed pleased, though, didn't she? O' course she was pleased; it's nat'ral she should be, wery nat'ral."

"He's wain of it!" exclaimed Sam, joining in his father's mirth—"he's actually wain!"

"Hush!" replied Mr. Weller, composing his features, "they're a comin' back, the little heart's a comin' back. But mark these words o' mine once more, and remember em ven your father says he said 'em: Samivel, I mistrust that deceitful barber."

## THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

### CHAPTER V.

Whether Mr. Quilp took any sleep by snatches of a few winks at a time, or whether he sat with his eyes wide open all night long, certain it is that he kept his cigar alight, and kindled every fresh one from the ashes of that which was nearly consumed, without requiring the assistance of a candle.

Nor did the striking of the clocks, hour after hour, appear to inspire him with any sense of drowsiness or any natural desire to go to rest, but rather to increase his wakefulness, which he showed, at every such indication of the progress of the night, by a suppressed cackling in his throat, and a motion of his shoulders, like one who laughs heartily, but at the same time slyly and by stealth.

At length the day broke, and poor Mrs. Quilp, shivering with the cold of early morning, and harassed by fatigue and want of sleep, was discovered sitting patiently on her chair, raising her eyes at intervals in mute appeal to the compassion and clemency of her lord, and gently reminding him by an occasional cough that she was still unpardoned, and that her penance had been of long duration.

But her dwarfish spouse still smoked his cigar and drank his rum without heeding her; and it was not until the sun had some time risen, and the activity and noise of city day were rife in the street, that he deigned to recognise her presence by any word or sign. He might not have done so even then, but for certain impatient tappings at the door, which seemed to denote that some pretty hard knuckles were actively engaged upon the other side.

"Why, dear me!" he said, looking round with a malicious grin, "it's day! Open the door, sweet Mrs. Quilp."

His obedient wife withdrew the bolt, and her lady mother entered.

Now Mrs. Jiniwin bounced into the room with great impetuosity, for supposing her son-in-law to be still a-bed, she had come to relieve her feelings by pronouncing a strong opinion upon his general conduct and character. Seeing that he was up and dressed, and that the room appeared to have been occupied ever since she quitted it on the previous evening, she stopped short, in some embarrassment.

Nothing escaped the hawk's eye of the ugly little man, who perfectly understanding what passed in the old lady's mind, turned uglier still in the fulness of his satisfaction, and bade her good morning with a leer of triumph.

"Why, Betsy," said the old woman, "you haven't been a—you don't mean to say you've been a—"

"Sitting up all night!" said Quilp, supplying the conclusion of the sentence. "Yes she has!"

"All night!" cried Mrs. Jiniwin.

"Aye, all night. Is the dear old lady deaf?" said Quilp, with a smile, of which a frown was part. "Who says man and wife are bad company? Ha! ha! The time has flown."

"You're a brute!" exclaimed Mrs. Jiniwin.

"Come, come," said Quilp, wilfully misunderstanding her, of course, "you mustn't call her names. She's married now, you know. And though she *did* beguile the time and keep me from my bed, you must not be so tenderly careful of me as to be out of humour with her. Bless you for a dear old lady. Here's your health."

"I am much obliged to you," returned the old woman, testifying by a certain restlessness in her hands, a vehement desire to shake her matronly fist at her son-in-law. "Oh! I'm very much obliged to you!"

"Grateful soul!" cried the dwarf. "Mrs. Quilp."

"Yes, Quilp," said the timid sufferer.

"Help your mother to get breakfast, Mrs. Quilp. I am going to the wharf this morning—the earlier, the better—so be quick."

Mrs. Jiniwin made a faint demonstration of rebellion by sitting down in a chair near the door, and folding her arms as if in a resolute determination to do nothing. But a few whispered words from her daughter, and a kind inquiry from her son-in-law whether she felt faint, with a hint that there was abundance of cold water in the next apartment, routed these symptoms effectually, and she applied herself to the prescribed preparations with sullen diligence.

While they were in progress, Mr. Quilp withdrew to the adjoining room, and, turning back his coat-collar, proceeded to smear his countenance with a damp towel of very unwholesome appearance, which made his complexion rather more cloudy than it was before. But, while he was thus engaged, his caution and inquisitiveness did not forsake him, for with a face as sharp and cunning as ever he often stopped, even in this short process, and stood listening for any conversation in the next room, of which he might be the theme.

"Ah!" he said, after a short effort of attention, "it was not the towel over my ears, I thought it wasn't. I'm a little hunchy villain and a monster, am I, Mrs. Jiniwin? Oh!"

The pleasure of this discovery called up the old dog-like smile in full force. When he had quite done with

it, he shook himself in a very dog-like manner, and rejoined the ladies.

Mr. Quilp now walked up to the front of the looking-glass, and was standing, putting on his neckerchief, when Mrs. Jiniwin, happening to be behind him, could not resist the inclination she felt to shake her fist at her tyrant son-in-law. It was the gesture of an instant, but as she did so, and accompanied the action with a menacing look, she met his eye in the glass, catching her in the very act. The same glance at the mirror conveyed to her the reflection of a horribly grotesque and distorted face with the tongue lolling out; and the next instant the dwarf, turning about with a perfectly bland and placid look, inquired in a tone of great affection,

"How are you now, my dear old darling?"

Slight and ridiculous as the incident was, it made him appear such a little fiend, and withal such a keen and knowing one, that the old woman felt too much afraid of him to utter a single word, and suffered herself to be led with extraordinary politeness to the breakfast table. Here he by no means diminished the impression he had just produced, for he ate hard eggs, shell and all, devoured gigantic prawns with the heads and tails on, chewed tobacco and water-cresses at the same time, and with extraordinary greediness drank boiling tea without winking, bit his fork and spoon till they bent again, and in short performed so many horrifying and uncommon acts, that the women were nearly frightened out of their wits, and began to doubt if he were really a human creature. At last, having gone through these proceedings and many others which were equally a part of his system, Mr. Quilp left them reduced to a very obedient and humble state, and betook himself to the river side, where he took boat for the wharf on which he had bestowed his name.

It was flood tide when Daniel Quilp sat himself down in the wherry to cross to the opposite shore. A fleet of barges were coming lazily on, some sideways, some head first, some stern first; all in a wrong-headed, dogged, obstinate way, bumping up against the larger craft, running under the bows of steamboats, getting into every kind of nook and corner where they had no business, and being crunched on all sides like so many walnut shells; while each with its pair of long sweeps struggling and splashing in the water looked like some lumbering fish in pain. In some of the vessels at anchor all hands were busily engaged in coiling ropes, spreading out sails to dry, taking in or discharging their cargoes; in others no life was visible but two or three tarry boys, and perhaps a barking dog running to and fro upon the deck, or scrambling up to look over the side and bark the louder for the view. Coming slowly on through the forests of masts was a great steam ship, beating the water in short, impatient strokes with her heavy paddles as though she wanted room to breathe, and advancing in her huge bulk like a sea monster among the minnows of the Thames.

On either hand were long black tiers of colliers; between them vessels slowly working out of harbour with sails glistening in the sun, and creaking noise on board, re-echoed from a hundred quarters. The water and all upon it was in active motion, dancing and buoyant and bubbling up; while the old gray Tower and piles of building on the shore, with many a church-spire shooting up between, looked coldly on, and seemed to disdain their chafing, restless neighbour.

Daniel Quilp, who was not much affected by a bright morning, save in so far as it spared him the trouble of carrying an umbrella, caused himself to be put ashore

hard by the wharf, and proceeded thither through a narrow lane, which, partaking of the amphibious character of its frequenters, had as much water as mud in its composition, and a very liberal supply of each. Arrived at his destination, the first object that presented itself to his view was a pair of very imperfectly shod feet, elevated in the air with the soles upwards, which remarkable appearance was referable to the boy, who, being of an eccentric spirit, and having a natural taste for tumbling, was now standing on his head and contemplating the aspect of the river under these uncommon circumstances. He was on his heels by the sound of his master's voice, and as soon as his head was in its right position, Mr. Quilp, to speak expressively in the absence of a better verb, "punched it" for him.

"Come, you let me alone," said the boy, parrying Quilp's hand with both his elbows alternately. "You'll get something you won't like if you don't, and so I tell you."

"You dog," snarled Quilp, "I'll beat you with an iron rod, I'll scratch you with a rusty nail, I'll pinch your eyes, if you talk to me—I will."

With these threats he clenched his hand again, and dexterously diving in between the elbows, and catching the boy's head as it dodged from side to side, gave it three or four good hard knocks. Having now carried his point, and insisted on it, he left off.

"You won't do it again," said the boy, nodding his head and drawing back, with the elbows ready in case of the worst; "now—"

"Stand still, you dog," said Quilp. "I won't do it again, because I've done it as often as I want. Here, take the key."

"Why don't you hit one of your size?" said the boy, approaching very slowly.

"Where is there one of my size, you dog?" returned Quilp. "Take the key, or I'll brain you with it"—indeed he gave him a smart rap with the handle as he spoke. "Now open the counting-house."

The boy sulkily complied, muttering at first, but desisting when he looked round and saw that Quilp was following him with a steady look. And here it may be remarked, that between this boy and the dwarf there existed a strange kind of mutual liking. How born or bred, or how nourished upon blows and threats on one side, and retorts and defiance on the other, is not to the purpose. Quilp would certainly suffer nobody to contradict him but the boy, and the boy would assuredly not have submitted to be so knocked about by any body but Quilp, when he had the power to runaway at any time he chose.

"Now," said Quilp, passing into the wooden counting-house, "you mind the wharf. Stand upon your head again, and I'll cut one of your feet off."

The boy made no answer, but directly Quilp had shut himself in, stood on his head before the door, then walked on his hands to the back and stood on his head there, and then to the opposite side and repeated the performance. There were indeed four sides to the counting-house, but he avoided that one where the window was, deeming it probable that Quilp would be looking out of it. This was prudent, for in point of fact the dwarf, knowing his disposition, was lying in wait at a little distance from the sash, armed with a large piece of wood, which, being rough and jagged, and studded in many parts with broken nails, might possibly have hurt him.

It was a dirty little box, this counting-house, with nothing in it but an old rickety desk and two stools, a

hat-peg, an ancient almanack, an inkstand with no ink and the stump of one pen, and an eight-day clock which hadn't gone for eighteen years at least, and of which the minute-hand had been twisted off for a tooth-pick. Daniel Quilp pulled his hat over his brows, climbed on to the desk, (which had a flat top,) and stretching his short length upon it, went to sleep with the ease of an old practitioner; intending, no doubt, to compensate himself for the deprivation of last night's rest, by a long and sound nap.

Sound it might have been, but long it was not, for he had not been asleep a quarter of an hour when the boy opened the door and thrust in his head, which was like a bundle of badly-picked oakum. Quilp was a light sleeper, and started up directly.

"Here's somebody for you," said the boy.

"Who?"

"I don't know."

"Ask!" said Quilp, seizing the trifle of wood before mentioned, and throwing it at him with such dexterity that it was well the boy disappeared before it reached the spot on which he had stood. "Ask, you dog."

Not caring to venture within range of such missiles again, the boy discreetly sent in his stead the first cause of the interruption, who now presented herself at the door.

"What, Nelly?" cried Quilp.

"Yes,"—said the child, hesitating whether to enter or retreat, for the dwarf just roused, with his dishevelled hair hanging all about him and a yellow handkerchief over his head, was something fearful to behold; "it's only me, sir."

"Come in," said Quilp, without getting off the desk.

"Come in. Stay. Just look into the yard, and see whether there's a boy standing on his head."

"No, sir," replied Nell. "He's on his feet."

"You're sure he is?" said Quilp. "Well. Now, come in and shut the door. What's your message, Nelly?"

The child handed him a letter; Mr. Quilp, without changing his position further than to turn over a little more on his side, and rest his chin on his hand, proceeded to make himself acquainted with its contents.

From the United Service Journal.

*Recollections of the Expedition to the Chesapeake, and against New Orleans, in the years 1814-15.*—By an Old Sub.

Although the present aspect of our political relations with the United States of America, gives but little apparent indication that we may possibly, ere long, be forced into a war with that power, there is a latent mischief smouldering at the bottom of the still unsettled Maine boundary dispute, which, once brought into action, and coupled with the difficulties we have yet to encounter in arranging the affairs of the Canadas, to the satisfaction of the people of both provinces, would require but little agitation to fan into a fierce flame. In the last contest with the Americans, both our ships and troops, in many instances, engaged the enemy at serious disadvantage, from their ignorance of the nature and extent of the force they had to contend with, or of the resources which might be rendered available, either for attack or defence, in a country which is essentially one of expedients. "Experience keeps a dear school," saith the proverb;



and whether events, yet "in the womb of time," prove such as may call upon us to turn its lessons to profit, or otherwise, it cannot be altogether useless to cast a retrospective glance on the ground we have passed over, and at once examine where we committed error, and inquire how that error could best have been avoided or remedied.

There are few of the old "Peninsulars" now living who do not recollect, with feelings of pride and pleasure, the glorious termination of the victorious career of the army of Spain, by the crowning campaign, in France, in the year 1814, and the subsequent "gathering" of the strongest regiments from the "broken-up" divisions, at the camp near Bordeaux, previous to embarkation for America. The military annals of England furnish no parallel of such a force as was there assembled—a force composed of the *élite* of the finest army in the world—veterans of a hundred battles, and with whom "to fight," and "to conquer," were synonymous terms. The destination of the largest portion of these troops was Canada, and the remainder, composed of the 4th, 21st, 44th, and 85th regiments, with a detachment of royal artillery, and sappers and miners, it was understood was to be employed on a particular service on the coast of the United States. In the last week of May, in the year 1814, the troops above specified struck their tents, and marched for Pouillac, (a small port on the Garonne,) each corps, as it passed the confines of the encampment, being saluted with "The British Grenadiers" by the bands of the remaining regiments, and three hearty cheers from their old companions in many a hard-fought field.

The scene was of a soul-stirring nature, and though amongst us there might have been some married officers, advanced in years, as well as in rank, who would have preferred returning to their wives and families to crossing the Atlantic—and even a few of the juniors, who would willingly have passed at least "one short month," amidst the delights of "England, home, and beauty," ere engaging in a new career of glory, there probably was not a soldier in our little host whose heart did not swell with martial ardour, and whose foot did not fall with a firmer tread, when those cheers hailed his gladdened ear.

Arrived at Pouillac, all the bustle and preparation previous to embarkation for a long and tedious voyage commenced. The time allowed was but short: every one had "animals" to dispose of, and the good people of the town and its vicinity could command but little cash, and were excessively chary in parting with that little. The only mode of obtaining any thing at all approximating to the value of the best cattle was by exchanging for wine, &c. and many officers were amply supplied, indeed, with the juice of the grape in every variety, from (so called) *Chateau-Margau* to *ordinaire*. As for the inferior description of animals, comprising heavy Flemish artillery horses, (*found* on the field of Vittoria,) Andalusian "fiddle-heads," and all imaginable grades of the donkey tribe, a bottle of brandy each was considered a tolerably fair price! In one instance—and one instance only—a lot of some three or four of those brought more, in fact, an enormous sum in comparison, and thus it happened:—their owner, annoyed at the ridiculous offers made for cattle which but a short time before had cost him a great deal of money, and determined not to turn the poor beasts adrift, to encounter the risk of being ill-treated or starved, announced his determination to shoot them, and was actually preparing to do so,

when a worthy curé stepped in, and proposed to give fifty francs, and two pieces of *vin ordinaire*, for the stud. This liberal overture was of course acceded to, the bargain was forthwith carried into effect, and the parties separated, mutually pleased with its termination.

The pay of the army being just then several months in arrear, and there not being sufficient time to communicate with parents, friends, &c. at home, the caterers for some of the many messes organised on board the different transports, troop, and King's ships—notwithstanding that every one lent to his brother-officer whatever money he could spare—had considerable difficulty in raising the "needful" to lay in the necessary supplies; for though the French people voted our animals to be worth little or nothing, they raised the price of all their commodities to a most exorbitant rate. One way or other, however, the thing was managed, and of wine, at least, there was no lack.

Having previously dropped down the river to Verdun Roads, the 2d of June saw our gallant little fleet, under the command of the late Sir Pultney Malcolm, in the Bay of Biscay,

Breasting the ocean at their ease,  
Like sea-birds on their native wave.

The Royal Oak, a fine 74, commanded by Captain Dix, bore the admiral's flag, and in that ship, also were embarked Major-General Ross, his personal staff, and the artillery. The 4th regiment was distributed between the Weser and the Trave, two fine sister-frigates, then recently taken from the French, and fitted up as troop-ships, and the Pactolus frigate; the greater part of the 85th was cooped up in the Diadem, an old heavy-built 64, armed *en flûte*, and the 21st and 44th were embarked on board of the transports and other troop-ships.

Those whose good fortune it has been never to have undergone the penance of making a long voyage in company with dull-sailing transports, can scarcely form an idea of its tedium and monotony. The sailor, under such circumstances, has the routine of his duty to occupy his mind, and relieve the sameness of the every-day scene; but—the morning parade over—the soldier must possess no small share of ingenuity who can devise means profitably or pleasantly to employ the remainder of the day. One of the first expedients called into action to stave off the insidious attacks of the demon, *ennui*, was the publication of a newspaper. Now prithee! reader, associate not the idea of a newspaper put out on board ship with that of a "double sheet" of the Times, for, in very truth, no two productions bearing the same designation could differ more widely. Our "Atlantic News" had, to be sure, an "Editor's box," for the receipt of contributions, but there nearly all resemblance between it and its brethren of the "broad sheet" ceased. From those contributions the best were selected, and, with such editorial comments as appeared necessary, copied out, on a respectable sheet of "foolscap," in the adjutant's office.

On board of the Royal Oak originated a happy thought of getting up a play, and the parts being duly "cast," studied, and rehearsed, and "appropriate scenery, dresses, and decorations" prepared, it was announced that "His Majesty's servants" would, on such a night, perform the farce of "Raising the Wind," &c. &c. &c. The evening proved propitious, and "a numerous and highly-respectable audience" being assembled, the "entertainments" commenced with an original prologue, written—

if memory serves aright—by Lieutenant H. of the Royal Oak. A portion of it, sufficient, perhaps, to give a notion of its merits, still survives the lapse of years in the lumber-room of the brain, and here it is:—

"Raising the Wind's" the "Order of the day!"  
There's something ominous in this same play;  
For if peace comes, my poor foreboding heart  
Tells me that *Diddler's* no fictitious part!

Ye luckless "Mids,"—ye miserable sinners!  
Look sharp about ye, or ye'll get no dinners;  
And haughty "Luffs," now swilling port and claret,  
May guzzle small-beer in some lumber-garret!  
Captains and Admirals—but that's downright sin—  
I've done, I've done!—So let the play begin.

And the "play" did "begin," and proceed, and end, amidst the most vociferous applause that ever was lavished upon actors. A supper and dance—for some ladies were collected from the different ships—concluded the amusements, which, it may be supposed, formed no insignificant feature in the voyage.

The Royal Oak doings evoked a spirit of friendly emulation on board the *Weser*, where Sheridan's comedy of "The Rivals" was put "in rehearsal," and in process of time enacted on board of that ship. This was a very ambitious undertaking, inasmuch as there were no ladies to represent the female characters, and those in "The Rivals" are by no means such as old campaigners are likely to personate with grace and fidelity. But "minds resolved" will "struggle with things impossible—nay, vanquish them," and so it was with the gallant King's Own, and of the *Weser*. The romantic Lydia Languish found a meet representative in Lieutenant M.—a delicate creature, standing somewhere about six feet, in what an Irishman would call "his stocking vamps." The fond and faithful Julia was "done" by Lieutenant G., who responded to the querulous sentiment of Falkland in a voice whose deep rough tones would be accurately described by Sir Anthony Absolute's neat and expressive simile of "the croaking of a frog in a quinsy," and the effect of Mrs. Malaprop's appearance, with a face and figure "made up" for the occasion, may be surmised, from an exclamation from one of the audience—"My eyes! What a brimstone!" But, notwithstanding all this, and that towards the close of the play a breeze came on, which caused both ship and performers to "reel to and fro like drunken men," and in a manner rather unseemly for those in petticoats, the piece "went off" with amazing *éclat*, and finished with uproarious plaudits. In *Weser*, as on board Royal Oak, the *finale* was a supper and dance.

The fleet touched at Ponte D'Algada, in St. Michael's, one of the Western Islands, to water, and obtain a supply of fresh provisions, &c. Here a circumstance occurred, illustrative of the inconvenience of bearing any personal resemblance to a bad character. It had been reported throughout the fleet, that the Ex-general Whitelocke, of Buenos Ayres notoriety, had, under a feigned name, taken up his residence at St. Michael's, and much curiosity was of course excited to learn if such were really the fact, and to get a glimpse of him. One fine evening, whilst the boats were ashore with fatigue parties, for the purpose of bringing off provisions, &c., some one cried out, "There goes Whitelocke!" and instantly every soldier and sailor present started in chase of the unfortunate individual pointed out; who, hearing a hideous outcry, and perceiving that he was about to be

come the object of an attack, very naturally took to his heels. The "run" lasted for some time, but the supposed culprit being light of foot, succeeded in distancing his pursuers, and thus escaped the favours which would, doubtless, have been liberally bestowed on him, had he been captured. Next day, however, he took means to ascertain the cause of his having been so unaccountably assailed, when the whole business was explained; and strange to say, it appeared that the "chase," although a much younger man than Whitelocke, bore a singular resemblance to him both in face and person.

During our stay at Ponte D'Algada, some hours were very agreeably passed in visiting at the "grates" of the convents, with which that place abounds, where our officers were as much objects of curiosity to the fair boarders, as the latter were of interest to us. The manner of carrying on the intercourse between those ladies and their visitors, though highly tantalizing, is perfectly safe, for one of the parties at least. A narrow winding stair-case leads to a small room, in which are placed two long forms. This room is separated from the convent parlour by a triple grating of iron bars, so placed as to prevent the possibility of the longest-armed lovers in the world touching as much as the tips of each other's fingers. In the *sanctum*, beyond this formidable barrier, were seated the young inmates of the cloisters, their lustrous eyes beaming unutterable things; whilst those amongst us who were fortunate enough to retain a smattering of "soldier's Portuguese," endeavoured to do the agreeable after the most approved fashion. Nor were the lovely and lively rogues in any degree disinclined to a display of all their powers of fascination. One of their number was placed as a sentinel at the parlour entrance to give timely notice of the approach of any of the "professed sisters;" whilst on our side a similar precaution was adopted to prevent surprise from without: We were thus gratified with "Tuas lindas Olios," "Tu mi Chama," and many other charming Portuguese ballads, as well as some pretty "figure" waltzing, in which the light and elegant forms of the captivating sirens were exhibited to the greatest possible advantage. These young ladies are generally the daughters of the most respectable families on the island, and are sent to the convents, in the first instance, for education, and to be "kept out of harm's way;" but such of them as, after returning to their homes, fail to obtain suitable matches, usually go back to the nunnery, enter on their novitiate, and finally take the veil.

The fleet, having obtained all the necessary supplies, once more put to sea, and carried a favourable wind on to the Bermudas, where we arrived on the 24th of July. To us landmen, the mode in which the sable pilot directed the course of the ship, whilst "beating up" from off St. George's to the "Wells," was equally novel and curious. Standing at the bow, his eyes were immovably fixed on the water, constant practice having given him extraordinary strength and quickness of vision in tracing the deep channel through the many windings of the dangerous coral reefs which run out from the land in every direction. Arrived at the "Wells," the operation of "watering" forthwith commenced, and parties were formed for a walk through the cedar woods to Hamilton. The weather was oppressively hot; and a "long drink" of Sangaree on arriving at Hamilton, was luxury indescribable. The most fertile imagination can scarcely conceive a spot combining so many, and such varied, scenes of beauty, as the eye embraces at Hamilton. The transparent ocean stream, thickly studded with

islands, wooded to the water's edge—the foliage presenting every possible hue. Here and there a planter's dwelling, or neat farm-house, deeply embosomed in the refreshing shade of the forest; extensive fields of Indian corn, the long, luxuriant leaves waving in the light breeze, and presenting at every moment a new tint of green—an air of happiness, quiet, and comfort pervades the whole picture, and the spectator involuntarily longs for a home in such a fairy land. Returning to the "Wells" next morning, we fell in with a merry group of negro lasses, proceeding to their master's plantation. They begged of us to make a visit there, and we, "nothing loth," agreed to do so. Crossing a beautiful garden, rich in the fruits and flowers of that lovely clime, we entered a large house, and were shown into a handsome and well-furnished saloon, the floor of cedar, *cirée*, and polished to a wondrous degree of glossiness and *glaziness*. The master of the mansion was absent, but his wife and daughters made their appearance, and received us with well-bred courtesy; whilst the dusky attendants ever and anon presented refreshments, which they urged us to partake of with the most untiring perseverance. This appeared to be their peculiar province, and faithfully did they discharge its duties. In Bermuda, as in the West Indies, unlimited hospitality is quite a matter of course amongst the planters.

At the "Wells" we found a negro fruit and vegetable market established; and here, as well as at Hamilton, and the house we had just visited, we were much struck by the extraordinary difference in the cast of features of the Bermudan negroes, as compared with those born in Africa. The women, in particular, were in many instances—though dark as jet—positively handsome; the nose aquiline, the lips finely chiselled, and the whole person graceful and *svelte*. A promenade was established on shore, and the band being landed, each evening the planters and their families came from far and near to enjoy the treat afforded them; the night usually closed with a merry dance, in which the fair 'Modans proved much better partners than their somewhat languid general manner would have led us to expect.

At Bermuda we found Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, with the *Tonnant*, on board of which ship Major-General Ross and his staff were received; and, on the 2d of August, sailed, with the *Euryalus* in company, for the Chesapeake, where they arrived on the 14th, and joined Rear-Admiral (now Sir George) Cockburn, in the *Albion*.

On the 17th of August, the whole of the expedition entered the Chesapeake. Between Capes Charles and Henry, we found the *Plantagenet*, Captain Lloyd, at anchor. This ship had, a short time before, been the object of some attempts to destroy her, by means of torpedoes exploded under her bottom; and it was really curious to hear the different opinions expressed, as to the effect of those explosions, by the officers and others on board; for whilst some described the shocks to have been of the most violent nature, others spoke of them as quite ridiculous, and utterly insufficient to work any serious damage.

It was generally supposed that our first attack would be made on Norfolk; but, after communicating by signal with Admiral Cockburn, we continued our course up the bay, until we came abreast of the Patuxent, to which river the American Commodore Barney had retired with the flotilla of gun-boats under his command. This armament it was resolved to destroy; and accordingly, the troop-ships and transports, protected by the *Royal Oak*, the *Albion*, &c. commenced the ascent of that river,

the *Anaconda* brig-of-war leading and sounding. At the same time a squadron of frigates, &c. under the command of Captain Sir Alexander Gordon, in the *Sea-horse*, was detached to create a diversion in the Potomac, whilst Captain Sir Peter Parker, with the *Menelaus*, proceeded up the Chesapeake, to a short distance above Baltimore, on a similar service.

The passage up the Patuxent was certainly a daring enterprise. The river, though of considerable depth, is of no great breadth; the banks are, in many places, high, covered with wood; and, from several positions, artillery might have been brought to bear on our crowded ships with tremendous effect. At Point Patience, a narrow spit of sand, where the river forms a sudden and sharp angle, we were obliged to come-to, and await a favourable breeze. This is a spot where half a dozen heavy guns, covered by riflemen in the woods, might keep the whole British fleet in check; but the fact is, that the Chesapeake, and the numerous magnificent rivers that flow into it, present such an extensive line of assailable coast, that the Americans knew not where or when to expect our attacks; and as to guarding the whole of the sea-board, that, for centuries to come, will be impossible; particularly when steamboats are likely to be employed. Still it appears extraordinary that Commodore Barney, who proved himself both a brave and skilful officer, did not offer some resistance to us at Point Patience.

Our large ships had not sufficient water to proceed more than a short distance beyond this point; but the troop-ships, transports, and the *Anaconda*, steadily pushed on as far as Benedict, a small village about fifty miles from Washington, where the troops were disembarked, on the 19th and 20th August.

Rear-Admiral Sir George Cockburn, who, with a battalion of marines, and a detachment of marine artillery, had for several months previous been carrying on a series of successful operations against the enemy, in this and other quarters, had during that period acquired some acquaintance with the nature and localities of the surrounding country, and of the enemy's disposable force; and this knowledge proved highly serviceable when, previous to the arrival of the troops, Major-General Ross landed with him to reconnoitre, which they did, without any interruption, to a considerable distance on the route towards Washington. It was during that excursion, it is said that, at the suggestion of Admiral Cockburn, General Ross first contemplated an attack on the capital of the United States, as soon as Commodore Barney's flotilla should be destroyed. The circumstance of this flotilla having retired as far as possible up the Patuxent, afforded an excellent ostensible motive for marching the troops in the direction of Washington, without giving rise to any certain conclusion that it was intended to make an attempt upon it.

On the evening of the 20th of August, Admiral Cockburn, with the armed boats of the fleet, moved up the river to attack the flotilla (which had retired about fifty miles above Benedict), whilst the troops advanced in the same direction along its right bank. To the surprise of every one, Commodore Barney's gun-boats, some of which were heavily armed, made no resistance. On this subject, the American General, Wilkinson, has the following passage in his Memoirs:—

"Cockburn, with his barges, pursued Barney's flotilla, which had, by order of President Madison, been abandoned, and was, without resistance, blown up; when it will be apparent to every competent judge, that, from the

narrowness of the channel, the Commodore could have defended himself, and repulsed any floating force the enemy could have brought against him; and his flanks were well secured by the extent of the marshes on both sides of the river."

It is probable, however, that the President's object, in giving the order referred to, was to destroy a strong inducement for our army to move in a direction which would bring them within such a tempting distance of the seat of his government. On the afternoon of the 22d, the day the flotilla was destroyed, General Ross and the troops arrived at the town of Upper Marlborough, a small place on the western branch of the Patuxent, thirty-nine miles distant from Benedict, and within sixteen miles of Washington. Our march thither was accomplished in about two days and a half, and that in the month of August, when the weather was most oppressively sultry, which, for men who had been nearly three months cooped up on board of ship, was severe work; but it was performed with the greatest cheerfulness. Here we halted till the evening of the 23d, when we were reinforced by Admiral Cockburn, with the ship marines, the marine artillery, and a proportion of the seamen which had been employed against the flotilla; and now the attempt upon the capital was finally resolved upon.

That our little army had been allowed to penetrate so far into the land without any opposition worth mentioning, was a matter of astonishment to us all. The country abounded with means for throwing military obstacles in our way, which it would have required no trifling exertions to surmount; but, most unaccountably, all those advantages were overlooked or neglected by the enemy, until it was too late to render them available. That they were afterwards discovered, however, appears by the following extract from General Wilkinson's work, already referred to:—

"Not a bridge was broken—not a causeway destroyed—not an inundation attempted—not a tree fallen—not a road of the road obstructed, nor a gun fired at the enemy, in a march of nearly forty miles from Benedict to Upper Marlborough, by a route on which there are ten or a dozen difficult defiles, which, with a few hours labour, six pieces of light artillery, three hundred infantry, two hundred riflemen, and sixty dragoons, could have been defended against any force that could approach them—such is the narrowness of the road, the profundity of the ravines, the steepness of the acclivities, and the sharpness of the ridges."

Let us now see what amount of force the enemy was in a condition to oppose to us, from the first. It has been made a boast of in the United States that certain hints, thrown out by the English commissioners at the conference at Ghent, confirmed by the rumoured destination of our troops embarked in the Garonne, led the American commissioners to acquaint their government that the capital of the Federal Union would probably be the object of an attack in the course of the year 1814. This intimation reached Mr. Madison, who then occupied the presidential chair, about the latter end of June, and, on the 18th of July, a plan was, by his directions, laid before his council, suggesting the best means of placing that part of the country in a state of defence adequate to the impending danger. It was proposed to call between 2000 and 3000 men immediately into the field, and to

10,000 or 12,000 militia and volunteers of the states adjoining the capital should always be held in readiness to reinforce that corps. The next step was to erect into a separate military district the whole state of Maryland, that part of the state of Virginia north of the river Rappahannock, and the District of Columbia, in the centre of which Washington is situated. This extensive tract of country includes an exposed coast of at least a thousand miles, stretching along the large rivers of Maryland and Virginia and the Chesapeake Bay. All these measures were adopted; and, as a further defensive preparation, on the 4th of July, the anniversary of their independence, Mr. Madison issued a requisition, calling upon the several states of the Union to furnish, respectively, as required by law, their quota of a force of 93,500 militia, and directing the magistrates of each state to embody and hold them in readiness for service at any moment they might be called upon. The tenth military district—that environing the metropolis—was to furnish 15,000 out of these 93,500 militia, and for the defence of the capital they were specially destined. Here, then, was no want of numbers to meet us.

On the morning of the 22d, the American army, under the command of General Winder, who had been joined by Commodore Barney and the men of his late flotilla, was reviewed at the "Old Long Fields," eight miles from Upper Marlborough, and immediately afterwards advanced a detachment along the road towards our camp, which, after exchanging a few long shots with our outposts, fell back to their old position.

On the evening of the 23d, leaving Captain Robyns and a sufficient force of marines in possession of Upper Marlborough, Major-General Ross and Rear-Admiral Cockburn, with the troops, marines, and seamen, moved forward, and, before dusk, arrived and took up their bivouac at a place near Centreville, five miles on the road towards Washington. The American army withdrew from their camp at the Old Long Fields about the time that our troops commenced the march from Upper Marlborough, and at nightfall our outposts occupied the ground they had retired from. The Americans fell back till they reached Washington, where they encamped at the navy-yard, and were joined in the evening by 2000 men from Baltimore. This last corps was stationed at Bladensburg.

At daybreak on the morning of the 24th, General Ross moved the troops on Bladensburg, twelve miles from our bivouac, and having made two short halts by the way, we reached and occupied the heights overlooking that village before noon. The direct road from our camp, on the night of the 23d, to Washington, was by a road leading to the lower bridge over the eastern branch of the Potomac, and by that road the distance was only about six miles; but, as it appeared certain that the bridge in question, which was half a mile long, and had "a draw" at the west end, would be strongly defended, both by a large body of men, and a heavy sloop-of-war and an armed schooner, known to be in the river, the route by Bladensburg was preferred. The river at that place is not deep, and, in case of the bridge there being destroyed, could easily be forded.

Let us now examine the relative numerical strength of the British force that so boldly approached the capital of the American Union, and of the army opposed to them, and posted in a position of their own selection. We shall give a historian of the United States' account of both:—"Those who had the best opportunity of counting them" (the British), "calculated that their

\* Wilkinson's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 766.



whole number was about 4000; and this calculation is warranted by the incidents in the field."\* The author then goes on to state—which he does with considerable accuracy—the distribution of our army into three brigades, as follows:—"The first brigade, commanded by Colonel Brooke, of the 44th, and composed of the 4th and 44th regiments; the second brigade, commanded by Colonel Patterson, of the 21st, and composed of that regiment, the second battalion of marines and the ship marines; the third brigade (light), commanded by Colonel Thornton, of the 85th light infantry, and composed of that regiment, the light companies of the 4th, 21st, and 44th regiments, the company of marine skirmishers, a detachment of colonial marines, also of royal artillery, with two 3-pounders and a howitzer, and a party of seamen and engineers, with rockets."

"The army under General Winder," says the same authority,† "consisted of—

"United States' dragoons . . . .	140
Maryland ditto. . . . .	240
District of Columbia ditto. . . .	50
Virginia ditto. . . . .	100
Regular infantry . . . . .	500
Seamen and marines . . . . .	600
	1100
Stansbury's brigade of Militia . .	1353
Sterrett's Regiment ditto. . . .	500
Baltimore artillery ditto. . . .	150
Pinkney's battalion ditto. . . .	150
	2153
Smith's brigade ditto. . . . .	1070
Cramer's battalion ditto. . . .	240
Waring's detachment ditto. . . .	150
Maynard's ditto, ditto. . . . .	150
	1610
Beall's and Hood's regiment of ditto. .	800
Volunteer corps . . . . .	350
	1150
Total at Bladensburg . . . . .	6543
<i>At Hand.</i>	
Young's brigade of militia . . . .	450
Minor's Virginia corps . . . . .	600
	1050
Grand total . . . . .	7593"

It will be observed that, in the foregoing statement, no direct reference is made to the 15,000 men General Winder was authorised to call out, but on the 3d of September, 1814, a certain General Armstrong wrote a letter, which was published in the Baltimore Patriot, and from which it is clear that the American general not only actually had those 15,000 men under his command, but was directed to add to them as many regular troops and seamen as would make his total force, when assembled, 16,300 men. Dr. Smith further tells us that General Winder, "after the battle, reported his forces at about 5000 men—nearly 2600 less than appears from the preceding detail;" and adds, "the American army had on the field not fewer than twenty-three pieces of artillery, varying from six to eighteen pounders."‡

\* History of the United States, by Dr. Smith, vol. iii. p. 298.

† Ibid. p. 297.

‡ Ibid. p. 297.

Whatever was the actual strength of the enemy in the field on the 24th of August, they certainly showed a formidable extent of front, drawn up in two lines on the heights commanding the turnpike-road leading from Bladensburg to Washington. Between us was the river (the eastern branch of the Potomac) and a long wooden bridge, within point-blank range of several pieces of artillery, placed in battery, at a fortified house in advance of the American position.

Mr. Madison, the president, was on the field, and the effect of his presence is thus described by General Wilkinson:—"Every eye was immediately turned upon the chief; every bosom throbbed with confidence; and every nerve was strung with valour. No doubt remained with the troops, that in their chief magistrate they beheld their commander-in-chief, who, like another Maurice, having by his irresolution in council exposed the country to the chances and accidents of a general engagement, had now come forward to repair the error by activity in the field; determined to throw himself into the gap of danger, and not to survive the honour of his country, especially entrusted to his guardianship."\* How far Mr. Madison justified this confidence in him, on the one hand, and the American army displayed their "valour-strung nerve," on the other, we shall presently see.

The action at Bladensburg was commenced with so much impetuosity by the light brigade, composed of the 85th, and the light companies of the other regiments of our small army, under the command of Colonel Thornton, that the wooden bridge, already described, was soon passed, in despite of the heavy fire kept up on it by the enemy's artillery and riflemen. The spot was, however, for the moment, a very *unhealthy* one, as many of our brave fellows experienced to their cost. Indeed, the first volley from the American front-line was well-delivered, and did considerable execution, several of our men being wounded by the buck-shot, three of which are made up, in addition to the ball, in the American musket cartridges. As soon as our skirmishers approached the fortified house, the enemy hastily abandoned it, and retreated to the high ground in his rear.

In support of the light brigade, our right wing was moved forward, under the command of Colonel (now Sir Arthur) Brooke, of the 44th, who, with that regiment, and the 4th, attacked the enemy's left—the 4th pressing so rapidly on as to compel him to abandon his guns. The first line, being thus completely routed, was driven in on the second, which, instead of covering their retreat, became utterly panic-struck, and fled without firing a shot! It is reported of the Duke of Wellington, that, when at the battle of Toulouse, the Spanish troops, after having, at the solicitation of their general, obtained the "post of honour," in advance, turned tail, and scampered off in "double-quick," at the first fire from the French, his grace very coolly observed—"Well, I never saw ten thousand men run a race before!" But had the duke been at Bladensburg, he most assuredly would have awarded the palm for alacrity in quitting the field to the Americans, who on this occasion completely threw the Spaniards into the shade. Whilst this was going on to the right, Colonel Thornton, with the left wing—about 700 strong—attacked the enemy's right, consisting of 2500 men, including Commodore Barney's seamen, marines, and guns, and, after a short struggle, put them to flight.

\* Wilkinson's Memoirs, vol. i. p. 781.

The left wing of the enemy, which was overthrown by between 700 and 800 rank and file of the 4th and 44th regiments—including a rocket party—was, according to American authority of unquestionable character, composed as follows:—

Regular and militia dragoons . . . . .	530
Major Pinkney's battalion of militia riflemen . . . . .	150
Doughty's riflemen . . . . .	100
Stansbury's militia brigade . . . . .	1353
Sterrett's militia regiment . . . . .	500
Baltimore artillery, with six pieces . . . . .	150
Major Peters, with six pieces of artillery—and Lieutenant-Colonel Scott, with the 36th United States regiment . . . . .	500
Burch's artillery, with four pieces . . . . .	100
Smith's militia brigade . . . . .	1073

Making a total of 4,450 men, and sixteen pieces of artillery! Ten pieces of artillery fell into our hands; and Commodore Barney, and Captain Miller, his second in command, were both severely wounded, and taken prisoners. They and their men behaved well, and made the only serious resistance we experienced.

From the circumstance of the American artillery—amounting in all, according to General Wilkinson's statement, to twenty-four pieces—completely enfilading the bridge, as has been stated, and proving very destructive to the advancing columns, our loss was much more severe than it would have otherwise have been. It amounted to one captain, two lieutenants, five sergeants, and fifty-six rank and file killed; two lieutenant-colonels, one major, one captain, fourteen lieutenants, two ensigns, ten sergeants, and hundred and fifty-five rank and file wounded. Total, sixty-four killed—one hundred and eighty-five wounded. Grand total, two hundred and forty-nine *hors de combat*. Of the American loss there is no accurate account. General Winder, in his official report of the affair, estimated the loss of his army at from thirty to forty killed, fifty to sixty wounded, and about one hundred and twenty prisoners. "It is believed, however," says Doctor Smith, "that this is a large computation; for Dr. Catlet, the attending surgeon, stated the killed at ten or twelve, and the wounded—some of whom died—at thirty."\*

As the Americans made such a poor stand, that their loss was comparatively trifling is not surprising; but the above calculation is certainly under the mark. Rear-Admiral Cockburn, in his despatch, accounts for our taking so few prisoners, by stating the simple fact, that it was "owing to the swiftness with which the enemy went off, and the fatigue our army had previously undergone." The routed Yankees ran away towards Washington, and our men—the rear-division having come up just before the short but decisive brush was over—halted for dinner.

When the Americans first observed the movement in advance of our troops, a loud and general cheer ran through their lines; upon which, one of our old Peninsular "light-bobs"—a genuine Patlander—with the characteristic coolness of a veteran exclaimed, "Och, by Jakers! that's false courage: let us see what you will say to us when we have been at it for half-an-hour or so." And the old soldier formed a correct opinion of our opponents, from Mr. Madison downwards; for the gallant president was the first to show the high value he set on a whole skin, by turning his back on the fight as

soon as it commenced. But an American writer\* shall tell this part of the story:—"Not all the allurements of fame, not all the obligations of duty, nor the solemn invocations of honour, could excite a spark of courage. The love of a life which had become useless to mankind, and served but to embarrass the public councils, and prejudice the public cause, stifled the voice of patriotism, and prevailed over the love of glory; and at the very first shot, the trembling coward, with a faltering voice, exclaimed, 'Come, General Armstrong; come, Colonel Munro; let us go, and leave it to the commanding general.' It may here be observed, *en passant*, that, in the course of an investigation by a committee, appointed by congress to inquire into the facts connected with the capture of Washington, it appeared that a mere accident saved the president, the attorney-general, and the secretaries of war and state, from falling into our hands, when General Ross, Admiral Cockburn, and Colonel Thornton—at the head of the advance—entered Bladensburg.

On ascending a rise of the turnpike-road, from which we had just driven the enemy, we were greeted by a group of negroes, to whom our victory gave freedom. They were, of course, rejoiced beyond measure at the happy change in their circumstances, and manifested their joy in a thousand extravagant ways. Their description of the swagger and blustering of the Americans, previous to the action, was highly amusing. "Ah! massa, we tink you neber git here, 'Merikan talk so big! One giniral say, 'Come on, ye English cut-throat, red-coat rascals, and see how we'll sarve you!' but, by and by, dat gentleman be the bery fust to run away!" Indeed, the whole conduct of the Americans (always excepting Commodore Barney) at Bladensburg afforded a most ludicrous commentary on the speech of Mr. Wright, member of congress for Maryland, who, from his place in the house, in the session of 1813-14, made use of the following language:—"There was no evidence against the courage or conduct of our army, which had displayed, not Roman, but American valour: so conspicuous, indeed, had been the courage displayed, by both our army and navy, that he hoped, whoever should hereafter speak of Roman valour, on this floor, would be considered as speaking of the second degree, and not of the first!"† After this, let the valiant Barbadians, whose only fault is "being really too brave," hide their diminished heads.

Commodore Barney, whose wound was a severe one, in the fleshy part of the thigh, was excessively indignant at the poltroonery of his countrymen, which he declared himself utterly unable to account for. He frequently exclaimed, "there were enough of them to have eaten every one of you!" The commodore was a plain, straightforward, sailor-like man, and expressed himself unsparingly on every subject connected with the war in general, and the expedition in particular. When he was told that there were serious grounds for suspecting that some of our men had been poisoned, by whiskey, with arsenic in it, being left in some of the houses at or near Upper Marlborough, (a fact which, to the disgrace of the American name, was afterwards ascertained beyond a doubt,) he appeared thunderstruck, and then imprecated curses on the heads of those who were guilty of such frightful atrocities. He must, however, have subsequently learned that that species of warfare was not confined to the Upper Marlborough doctor and his friends, but was, in several instances, practised by the

\* History of the United States, vol. iii. p. 298.

\* General Wilkinson—see his Memoirs, vol. i. p. 753.

† Proceedings of Congress, January 6, 1814.

Americans in captured vessels, on the prize-masters and crews put on board to carry them into port.

After a halt of two hours, we again moved forward along the high road to Washington; and at about eight o'clock P. M. another halt was called, and the different regiments formed on an open space about two miles from that city. The general, the admiral, and some other officers, accompanied by a small covering party, rode forward to reconnoitre. It was nearly dark, and on these officers passing the first houses in the straggling outskirts of the town, a volley was fired from the windows of two houses a little farther up the street, and from the capitol, by which one soldier was killed, three were wounded and General Ross's horse shot under him. The light companies left in the rear were immediately ordered up, but before they arrived, the houses were forced and burned, after the men who had fired were taken out and made prisoners. The capitol, which was at no great distance from those buildings, was also set on fire. That edifice contained the senate-chamber, the hall of congress, the supreme court, congressional library, and legislative archives; and its destruction—putting entirely out of the question that we were assailed from it—was but a just, though ample, retribution for the destruction, by the Americans, of the house of assembly, at York (now Toronto), in Upper Canada, and the plunder of the defenceless inhabitants of that and other towns in the provinces, and the wanton burning of the village of Newark.

There was also an object of paramount importance to be forwarded by destroying the public offices in Washington; but as the subject is connected with a project at that time seriously agitated (and participated in by many influential Americans), to separate the northern and eastern from the southern and western states—a project which shall be entered into at some length in a future paper—it need not be further alluded to at present.

(To be continued.)

## THE ASHES OF BUONAPARTE.

From Fraser's Magazine.

France is at present in a tumult of joy, from the peaks of the Pyrenees to the frontiers of Flanders, from Calais to Geneva. The bones, the ashes, the remains, the relics of the man of destiny, are to be brought back; and Saint Helena is to yield its captive. The grand desideratum is achieved at last. Napoleon is to repose under the dome of the Invalides. Much honour is heaped upon the English ministry, for its magnanimity in surrendering the dust of Napoleon: more upon Louis Philippe for his greatness of soul and patriotism in asking for the restoration of him, who, though he was the glory of France, was the scourge of the Bourbons; but, most of all, upon M. Thiers, for the nobility of the original thought, and the powerful eloquence with which he urged its realisation in the chamber of deputies.

Great is the grandeur of *galimatias*. We shall therefore translate, as carefully as we can, his speech delivered in the chamber of deputies, on Tuesday, May 12, from what appears to us to be an authenticated report. It is, then, as follows:—

"The king has ordered his royal highness the Prince de Joinville to proceed with his frigate to St. Helena, to obtain the last mortal remains of the Emperor Napoleon. We now ask you to grant us the means of receiving

them in a worthy manner upon the soil of France, and of erecting the last tomb of Napoleon. The government, anxious to accomplish a national duty, addressed itself to England, and requested to have the precious deposit which fortune had placed in her hands. The wish had hardly been expressed when it was complied with. These are the words of our magnanimous ally:—

"The government of her Britannic majesty hopes that the promptitude of its reply will be regarded in France as a proof of its desire utterly to efface the national animosities which, during the life of the emperor, armed England and France against each other. The government of her Britannic majesty takes pleasure in believing that if such sentiments still exist in any quarter they will be buried in the tomb in which the ashes of Napoleon are about to be placed." England is right,—this noble restitution strengthens the bonds which unite us. She has just effaced the painful recollections of the past. The time has arrived when the two nations should remember only their glory. The frigate charged with the mortal remains of Napoleon will arrive at the mouth of the Seine, where they will be removed to another vessel which will convey them to Paris. They will be deposited at the Invalides. A solemn ceremony—a grand religious and military pomp—will inaugurate the tomb which is to receive them for ever. It is important to the majesty of such a *souvenir*, that this august sepulchre should not be in a public place, in the midst of a noisy and inattentive crowd. It is proper that it should be in a silent and sacred spot, which can be visited with awe by those who respect glory and genius, grandeur and misfortune. He was emperor and king. He was the legitimate sovereign of our country. With such a title, he could be interred at St. Denis; but Napoleon must not have the ordinary sepulture of kings. He must still reign and command in the building in which the soldiers of the country repose, and to which all who may be called upon to defend it will go to draw their inspirations. His sword will be placed upon his tomb. Under the dome in the midst of the temple consecrated by religion to the God of armies, art will raise a tomb worthy, if possible, of the name which is to be engraved upon it. This monument must be of simple beauty, but of noble form, and have that aspect of firmness and solidity which appears to defy the action of time. The monument of Napoleon must be as durable as his name. The credit which we ask for is for the translation of the remains to the Invalides, the funeral ceremony, and the construction of the tomb. We do not doubt that the chamber will associate itself, with patriotic emotion, with the royal intentions which we have just announced. In future France, and France alone, will possess what remains of Napoleon. The grave, like the memory of Napoleon, will belong only to this country. The monarchy of 1830 is, in fact, the only and legitimate heir of all the *souvenirs* of which France is proud. It belonged, doubtlessly, to this monarchy, which was the first to rally all the strength and conciliate all the wishes of the French revolution, to raise and fearlessly to honour the statue and the tomb of a popular hero; for there is only one thing which does not dread a comparison with glory,—it is liberty!"

It is no wonder that so splendid an oration,—filled with so many fine things, such towering tropes, and such mounting metaphors,—loaded, besides, with so many allusions grateful to the *gloire* and to the *cœur sensible* of France, should have been received with thunders of acclamation and applause; and that the friends of the

MUSEUM.—APRIL, 1840.

little orator should have hastened to crowd about him, proffering congratulations, and smothering him with embraces. For far less matters,

"Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak."

The only controversy that rears its head amid this general happiness and hilarity, is with respect to the place of sepulture. The eloquent minister of the interior, it will be perceived by his speech, proposes that the ashes of the favourite hero of the French soldier should lie among the ashes of his companions in arms. This, one would think, ought to satisfy the military adorers of Buonaparte; and, perhaps, so it does. But there is another party of worshippers, whose imaginations being more affected by regal than by martial recollections, are anxious that he should be deposited in the cemetery of the kings of France at Saint Denis. The controversy is carried on hotly enough; and, no doubt, after a due effusion of Christian ink, it will ripen into a very respectable quarrel. A third party, which however seems to consist exclusively of the Cockney school of taste in Paris, is in favour of burying him under the column in the Place Vendôme; so that it might have his cocked hat on the summit and his coffin at the base, which would indeed be elegant and picturesque. Dismissing this columnar faction, we admit that of the other proposals—that of the Invalides and Saint Denis—much, as Sir Roger de Coverley cautiously remarked many a long day ago, may be said on both sides. He was a soldier, says M. Thiers; he therefore should lie with soldiers. He was, according to your own account, rejoin his antagonists, the legitimate king of France; let him lie, therefore, among the legitimate kings. The contest may thus be carried on until the crack of doom, without satisfying either party.

We shall soon have to suggest other considerations respecting his present place of sepulture; but in the mean time we may remark, that, so far as safety is concerned, Napoleon is much safer in St. Helena than he would be in Paris. At present, indeed, he is the popular idol; and Shakspeare's disregarded epitaph

("Blest be the man that spares these stones,  
And curst be he who moves my bones,")

may be safely dispensed with in the case of the Parisian tomb of Buonaparte. Any insult to his bones would be followed by vengeance rapid and unsparing. But who can say that this feeling will last? *Videtur, fili mi*, said the shrewd Alexander VI. to his son Cesar Borgia, as they entered a town on his road to Rome, shortly after his elevation to the papal chair, and found the inhabitants busily occupied in pulling down a gibbet, on which his effigy had been swinging, to replace it by a statue in his honour.—*Videtur, fili mi, quantum interest inter patibulum et statuum?*—How slight is the difference between a gallows and a statue! Among us, of steadier and sturdier feelings, there is little chance that monuments will, under any circumstances, be disturbed. The erasure of the inscription on the monument, charging the papists with burning the city, was a piece of childish folly, worthy only of the weak creatures by whom it was perpetrated as an act of immense liberality; but we cannot forget, that "the legitimate kings of France" were, in an excess of Jacobin fury, torn out of their graves, their tombs demolished, and their remains scattered to the winds, amid every mark of insult and disgrace. We do not forget that among them was Henri Quatre himself—Henri Quatre, once as great a favourite of France

as Napoleon is now; a man who certainly had not commanded as large armies, but who in his campaigns had given every proof of tactical and strategical ability, and who, in the more chivalrous additions of a soldier, grace, wit, generosity, personal daring, and gay gallantry—qualities most adapted to win and retain popular affection—far outstripped his more diplomatic and scientific successor; who brought to an end a wasting civil war, and laid the basis for the consolidation of France; who put his country—for the first time securely since the wars of our Edward III. began, more than two hundred years before—in the condition of keeping out of it those enemies whom the reverses of Buonaparte brought into it some couple of hundred years after; who, as

"De son peuple le vainqueur et le père,"

was the hero of the only epic French poem, and that poem, too, written by one of the gods of Jacobin idolatry, Voltaire, then placed in a sort of hero worship in the Parthenon; and yet this Henri Quatre, long the honoured theme of "tradition, legend, tale, and song,"—the bright exemplar of all that was gallant, and brilliant, and valiant in French history, was dragged from his ceremonies, and his embalmed body, presenting still a semblance of life, exposed to the brutal abominations of a ruffian mob; until, at last, his mustache having been hacked off by a soldier—*un soldat de la France*,—that form, which had been the earthly temple of his noble spirit, was trampled into its original clay by the hoofs of the liberalised regenerators of Europe. Could they have found Charlemagne, his remains would have experienced precisely the same treatment. What is to ensure a safer perpetuity of favour for the relics of Napoleon? He is out of the reach of such fluctuation of Parisian passion while at St. Helena. *We* shall never insult him. Who can predict that some new Marat or Hebert may arise in Paris, in whose eyes the assumption of monarchical title will obliterate all gratitude for military glories?

M. Thiers, in his speech, says that "the august sepulture should not be in a public place, in the midst of a noisy and inattentive crowd. It is proper that it should be in a silent and sacred spot, which can be visited with awe by those who respect glory and genius, grandeur and misfortune." Is it not so now? What part of Paris can equal the silence, and the sacredness of the spot, in which Napoleon lies this moment? But there is something magnificently cockney in the Parisianism of the last sentence. Thousands, and tens of thousands, have visited Buonaparte's present tomb. What proportion of them is French? It is, of course, impossible to offer any thing like a precise calculation; but if we said one in a hundred, we should most grossly exaggerate. Among them how many Parisians? One, perhaps, in five thousand. It would be just the same if he lay at Boulogne. Not a man of all those who are now making so great a fuss about him would go a hundred miles, or twenty miles, out of his way, to visit the spot where the so-much lauded warrior was laid. If he were buried within three miles of Montmartre, the attraction of a new dancer would cast him into oblivion at any given moment. If it were merely silence and sacredness that are required, St. Helena is the place. But M. Thiers wants no such things; he wants noise and clap-trap, and these are to be had only in Paris.

If the true sublime were consulted, Napoleon would be allowed to remain in St. Helena. He has it all to himself. He is the sole man buried in the Atlantic who has



a distinct burial place in the bosom of the ocean. In Pagan mythology Sicily was not more decidedly the burial-place of Enceladus, than St. Helena is that of the giant disturber of our own generation. There lies he alone—quite alone—a mark for all who sail along the watery ways. The islands and the coasts of the tropics have given their last houses to millions of men since death began in the world, and no doubt the bones of many a gallant and worthy fellow are there deposited: but of them, who takes thought? Those who traverse the highway from Europe to India, from the continent he had all but won to the empire which was for ever the dazzling object of his ambition—all who

“On the trading flood,  
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape,  
Ply stemming nightly to the Pole”—

all whose thoughts turn to the shores of America or Africa,—all who go down in ships, or think of wandering over the face of the deep,—to them is the tomb of Buonaparte vividly present. No one passes St. Helena, without visiting the willows waving over him. Men going on bold enterprise, or sent to govern provinces equal to kingdoms, or returning from splendid rule or brilliant conquest—the soldier in quest of fame, the sailor of adventure, the merchant of wealth, or each bound homeward laden with what he sought—the star-calculating astronomer, the pondering antiquary, the learned philologist, the zealous missionary,—these are no idle visitors; and by them is the grave of Buonaparte duly hallowed. Nay, nations and tribes—the men

“From India and the golden Chersonese,  
And utmost Indian isle, Taprobane,  
Dusk faces with white silken turbans wreathed”—

men to whom are unknown the names of all other European conquerors, save those before whose swords they had bowed—they, from the Rajah to the Lascar, have been impressed by a misty and glimmering sense of the greatness of the man whom their masters found it so difficult to subdue, and deemed it so requisite to guard with such rigorous solicitude. There he lies in his ocean resting-place, as well known to “all that handle the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea,” as was in the days of Arabian romance the brazen warrior, standing in solicitude upon the wave-washed mountain of adamant, awaiting the coming of Prince Ajib. So should the earthly warrior abide amid his wave-washed precipices, awaiting the more dread summons, the last trumpet-call, which will order “the sea to give up its dead.” Sorry, indeed, is the taste, which would remove him from this sublime dwelling to make him an additional attraction among the tinsel mummeries of Paris—to confound him with the melodramatic sorrows, the tawdry *immortelles*, the musty wreaths, of Pere la Chaise—to take him from a place where his remains will command the respect of MEN—and no common men now pass his tomb—to put him where he will be only a mark for the peering and the jabbering of *monkeys*—to degrade him from being the *genius loci* of one of the great landmarks of the world, where

“He, so sepulchred, in such pomp doth lie,  
That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die,”

to become an additional raree-show to gratify a cockney

curiosity, and share the glories of an opera-dancer, a patriotic sputter in the chamber of deputies, or any other buffoon of the minute, consigned with theatrical honours to the grave. “Etre *Bu.naparte*, et devenir *aire*,” said Paul Louis Courier, when he was asked to assent to Napoleon's assuming the title of emperor; “c'est descendre.” The present removal is a descent as striking, without any of the imperial gilding to recommend it.

Enough of this: we might add that Napoleon's real monument is in his history. Who knows, who cares to know, where Hannibal was buried? And of what consequence is it that the sarcophagus of Alexander is now nothing more than an ornament of a museum? To quote Milton's epitaph on Shakespeare once more, with due alterations—

What needs Napoleon for his war-famed bones  
The labour of an age in piled stones—  
Or that his mortal reliques should be hid  
Under a starry-pointed pyramid?  
Dread son of memory, stern heir of fame!  
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?

If mere notoriety for his grave be required, let him be where he is. The very singularity will mark it. To descend from the hero of battles and campaigns to humbler and gentler aspirants after fame, is it not the case, that, while the tombs of more illustrious ladies are unknown or unmarked, no reader of our literature need be told that in Cape Coast Castle lie, in neglected and unhonoured burial-place, the mortal remnants of L. E. L.?

It is not, however, as a mere matter of taste that these mouldering remains are disturbed. As Edward I. commanded on his dying bed that his bones should be carried in advance of the English army to strike terror into the Scots, as it is supposed that the Hussites converted the skin of the leader Ziska into a drum to inspire their imperial antagonists with awe, so are the relics of Napoleon brought back to Europe as ominous heralds and precursors of revolution and war. In the present excitable state of France, when the generation that remembered the actual miseries of war, the dreadful slaughter of her sons, the invasion of her soil, the occupation of her capital, the varied wretchedness of the closing reign of Buonaparte, from Moscow to Waterloo, and who know nothing by experience of the grinding tyranny of the conscription, is fast passing away, a thirst for military renown torments her youth. The voice of *la jeune France* is all for war. The defeats of Napoleon are forgotten or glossed over, and his victories are dwelt upon with increasing rapture. Distance performs her usual part of lending enchantment to the view, and a flood of glory bursts before their eyes. The sight of the ashes of Buonaparte, with the theatrical ceremonies which will attend their introduction, the sounding speeches which will be pronounced over his tomb, the recollect ions of triumph or of vengeance which they will call up, must throw all these people into the very exaltation of enthusiasm.

This may seem to be visionary speculation; a short time will now suffice to tell. But there is one plain, practical difficulty, already created by the restoration of Napoleon's remains. It is asked, and we think with every appearance of justice, why should the bones of Buonaparte be brought back, and the brothers and the rest of the blood of Buonaparte sternly refused admission into France? The faction which favoured the pretensions of his house was rapidly dwindling; but this event will

materially increase it again. The presence of his relics in the Invalides, or wherever else they may be placed, (not at St. Denis, we may be sure, for that is too far off to make them a show for the Parisians, which is one of the objects of the removal.) will inspire many zealous bosoms with the hope that they may be gladdened with the presence of his relations in the Tuileries. The Buonapartists, too, may fairly catch at M. Thiers's emphatic declaration, that Napoleon was the legitimate monarch of France, and argue that, such being the case, his family should be invested with all the hereditary rights of legitimacy. We need not say how unpalatable would the legitimate consequences of this doctrine be to the dynasty of Louis Philippe. How that wily and long-headed statesman was induced to consent to such a step we cannot conceive. The elder branch of the Bourbons might have admitted the dangerous relics with less peril. They were the open and avowed antagonists of the revolution; and the presence of the bones could not have made them an additional enemy. On the contrary, it might, by being considered an act of magnanimity, have obtained for them an abatement of hostile feeling. That which perhaps might have strengthened the throne of Louis XVIII. or supported that of Charles X. may jeopard the reign of Louis Philippe, by provoking comparisons. If France is to have dynasties of such questionable legitimacy—for *pace* M. Thiers, Napoleon was not quite a legitimate king—there are many whom the recollections of Marengo, Austerlitz, Jena, and other fields of fame, will induce to think that the Buonaparteans is the dynasty for choice. Are, then, the dreams of the believers in the fatality of *l'an quarante* to be verified? Is the prediction, which they have fished up out of old Michael Nostradamus, and read and interpreted in their own fashion, to come to pass? Perhaps: for though we do not believe in the inspiration of the poetic seer, we know that a belief in such prophecies often works their accomplishment; and it is held matter of gospel by many thousands in France, and they not old women, that the prosperous career of Louis Philippe is to close this year, according to Nostradamus's prophecy in the eighty-ninth quatrain of his ninth century:—

"Dix ans Philip fortune prospère,  
Rabaissera des Barbares l'effort,  
Puis son viddy perplex rebours affaire,  
Jeune Ogmion abyssera son fort."

Which may be thus versified in English:—

Ten years shall Philip rule in prosperous sway,  
And conquering quell the proud Barbarian race;  
Then cross, perplexed, shall be his middle day,  
Young Ogmion shall his strongest power abase.

What the fate or fortunes of that Ogmion, by which name Nostradamus, in his strange verses, always designates a king of France, whom some of his present believers interpret to be Henry Cinq, others Prince Louis Napoleon, (for there are superstitious dreamers in all parties, even among those which pretend most to liberality, philosophy, enlightenment of mind, and so forth,) it would require a prophet of more long-seeing reach of mind than even that famous wizard himself could claim, to pretend to anticipate. Certain, however, it is, that the Prince de Joinville is bringing home a present, which may be as dangerous to his house as was the fatal horse to the Trojan city; and if Nereus still bear away over

the winds, he may lull them into quiet while he discloses fates as fierce to the son of Louis Philippe as those which he made to burst upon the ears of the son of Priam, when his vessels, too, were steering homeward, freighted with a romantic cargo of blood-begetting mischief.

But we, too, may grow as superstitious in our own way as the followers of Nostradamus, and shall not dip any more into futurity. The approaching departure of the remains of Buonaparte from St. Helena recalls to us the time when he was laid there, and to the feelings which his entombment then occasioned. How can we better express them than in some beautiful verses written immediately on the arrival of the tidings of his death? The news arrived in Liverpool in the July of 1821; thence to fly, like wild-fire, over the world. The verses we are about to quote were anonymous, but we well know who wrote them. Why does not he write verses now?

#### "NAPOLEON.

The mighty sun had just gone down  
Into the chambers of the deep;  
The ocean-birds had upward flown,  
Each in his cave to sleep.

And silent was the island shore,  
And breathless all the broad red sea,  
And motionless beside the door  
Our solitary tree.

Our only tree, our ancient palm,  
Whose shadow sleeps our door beside,  
Partook the universal calm,  
When Buonaparté died.

An ancient man, a stately man,  
Came forth beneath the spreading tree;  
His silent thoughts I could not scan,  
His tears I needs must see.

A trembling hand had partly cover'd  
The old man's weeping countenance,  
Yet something o'er his sorrow hover'd  
That spake of war and France;

Something that spake of other days,  
When trumpets pierced the kindling air,  
And the keen eye could firmly gaze  
Through battle's crimson glare.

Said I, perchance this faded hand,  
When Life beat high and Hope was young,  
By Lodi's wave—on Syria's sand—  
The bolt of death had flung.

Young Buonaparté's battle-cry,  
Perchance, had kindled this old cheek;  
It is no shame that he should sigh,—  
His heart is like to break.

He hath been with him, young and old;  
He climb'd with him the Alpine snow;  
He heard the cannon when they roll'd  
Along the silver Po.

His soul was as a sword, to leap  
At his accustom'd leader's word;  
I love to see the old man weep—  
He knew no other lord.

As if it were but yesternight,  
This man remembers dark Eylau—  
His dreams are of the eagle's flight,  
Victorious long ago.

The memories of worse time  
Are all as shadows unto him;  
Fresh stands the picture of his prime,—  
The later trace is dim.

I enter'd, and I saw him lie  
Within the chamber, all alone,  
I drew near very solemnly  
To dead Napoleon.

He was not shrouded in a shroud,  
He lay not like the vulgar dead;  
Yet all of haughty, stern, and proud,  
From his pale brow was fled.

He had put harness on to die,  
The eagle-star shone on his breast;  
His sword lay bare his pillow nigh,—  
The sword he liked the best.

But calm—most calm was all his face,  
A solemn smile was on his lips;  
His eyes were closed in pensive grace—  
A most serene eclipse!

Ye would have said some sainted sprito  
Had left its passionless abode;  
Some man, whose prayer at morn and night,  
Had duly risen to God.

What thoughts had calm'd his dying breast  
(For calm he died) cannot be known;  
Nor would I wound a warrior's rest—  
Farewell, Napoleon!

No sculptor'd pile our hands shall rear;  
Thy simple sod the stream shall lave,  
The native holly's leaf severe  
Shall grace and guard thy grave.

The eagle stooping from the sky  
Shall fold his wing and rest him here,  
And onwards gaze with glowing eye  
From Buonaparté's bier.

Are we to go to the casking, shipping, and custom-  
housing, to the capgrossing, and fustian, and bombast of  
the Paris cockneys after that! So be it—*c'est de-  
scendre!*

From Blackwood's Magazine.

ABOUKIR.

Napoleon's Egyptian expedition supplies one of the  
most distinct proofs ever given of the Divine punish-  
ment which may directly stamp a great public crime.  
Many acts of memorable atrocity have of old unques-  
tionably passed without any evident retribution; but of  
later years, whether for the purpose of more powerfully  
impressing justice on the minds of modern nations, or  
from the nearer approach of some great but still undefined  
consummation, the retribution has trod with singular  
closeness on the steps of the crime.

It is right previously to observe, that those direct in-  
flictions seem seldom to be visited on the general course  
of public crime in high places, however repulsive. The  
punishment of what may be called the customary crimi-  
nality, the habitual ambitions and encroachments of  
nations on each other, are apparently left to customary  
and general evils. But it is when nations, or their  
rulers, start out of the common track of ambition and  
encroachment, that a new, sudden, and striking brand of  
vengeance is often openly burned on them. Thus the  
partition of Poland was an act of plunder and blood be-  
yond the ordinary line of that rapacity and cruelty which  
habitually marks the conduct of foreign cabinets; and  
never was the punishment of a highway robbery or  
murder more directly marked in the punishment of the  
individual robber and murderer than the punishment of  
that dreadful atrocity was marked in the sufferings of  
Prussia, Austria, and Russia—within a few years from  
the crime, the capture of their three capitals, the defeat  
of their armies, and the vast losses of wealth, population,  
honour, and territory.

The late instance of the invasion of Algiers, without  
the slightest cause except the French desire to gain what  
it terms glory, by cutting throats, and robbing wherever  
it can with impunity, was instantly followed to the king  
by the downfall of the Bourbon dynasty, as it has been  
followed to France by the erection of an anomalous and  
precarious government—forced to be despotic through  
fear of being forced to be republican; and the anxieties  
of a war, which, after wasting life and treasure during  
ten years, is now to be begun afresh, and requires an  
army of 60,000 men. We shall thus see America, in  
due time, punished for her atrocious robbery by which  
she has seized Texas, and for her gross and wholly un-  
justifiable attempts on Canada. Russia will yet have to  
pay heavily in blood for her invasion of the brave Cau-  
cassian tribes, for her cruel extinction of the few remains  
of independence in unhappy Poland, and for that un-  
licensed and unlimited system of grasping by which she  
continues the guilty policy of Catharine, and labours to  
add thousands of slaves, and tens of thousands of square  
miles, to a population and territory beyond the power of  
any man to govern wisely—beyond any nation to hold  
safely—and beyond every thing but the indescribable  
fury of human ambition.

Napoleon's Egyptian enterprise was exactly of this  
order of ultra-atrocity.

It is the universal characteristic of foreign politics,  
that they have no morality whatever. Whatever they  
can grasp, they grasp; and by whatever means they can  
obtain their objects, they obtain them. France has, in  
all ages, differed from her continental neighbours only in  
putting these maxims into more unhesitating practice.  
What fraud can contrive and force can perform, will

inevitably be contrived and performed by her, on every occasion where it can be done with impunity. The only country on earth which ever exhibits a sense of common justice in her public transactions, is England; and even at this moment no ministry of England would be suffered by the nation to seize a single acre of the feeblest state on earth,\* without having strict justice on the national side. This is an eminent honour to the national character, and one which must never be forfeited.

Egypt had thus been an object of French cupidity for upwards of a hundred years. There exists a memorial of Leibnitz, then at the head of all continental science, addressed to Louis XIV. recommending the seizure, at the period when that profligate and sanguinary despot was assaulting Holland. This philosophic tempter advised him to signalise his ambition more effectually, even in Europe, by seizing on a province which promised a more easy and profitable victory than the swamps and sands of the Dutch. He justly told the king that he could not pursue a Dutch war without exciting the jealousy of Europe. "It is in Egypt," said he, "that the true blow can be struck." He then laboured to show, that the possession would give him the road to India, and put her opulent trade into his hands; that it would thus engross the real sources of the wealth of Holland—extinguish the competitorship of Europe—and, by making the Mediterranean a French lake, virtually place Louis on the throne of Europe. Louis was fortunately as self-willed as he was sanguinary; he preferred the nearer conquest; brought on himself the aims of England and Europe, was hunted up to the gates of Versailles; and ought to have been hanged on those gates, with his whole ministry round him, if justice had been done.

A quarter of a century before the French Revolution, Savary, one of those scientific infidels who poisoned the public mind and prepared that revolution, had gone to Egypt, and given a description of it in the national style,—a flourish of romance, in which every thing was dipped in colours of the rainbow, and the appetite of the nation was again excited to seize on this African paradise.

On the conquest of Italy, in 1797, the project of seizing Egypt was adopted by the directory. It offered various temptations to that atrocious underhand policy, which regards every thing but justice. To Napoleon, the command of a fleet and army, which would keep him before the eyes of France—to the directory, the opportunity of getting rid of a too popular general and unemployed army for the time—and to the nation, that phantasm of national glory which is always able to delude France. We can find no counteracting opinion at the time—no honest remonstrance against the utter villainy of plundering an ancient ally, and the utter impolicy of showing that with France treaties were waste paper; we cannot find even any humane and natural protest against the actual murder of the multitude of men, Frenchmen as well as Turks and Arabs, who must perish in the invasion. On the contrary, all France was in exultation at the sight of the vast armament gathered for the purpose at Toulon; and neither among her people nor her priesthood was one warning voice raised against this preparative for wholesale robbery and slaughter.

In the beginning all seemed fortunate. The expedition sailed, escaped the British fleet, reached Malta, of which it became possessed by corruption; and turning out the weak and perfidious knights, placed in it a

French garrison, and then reached Alexandria in safety, made its spirit known by putting 1200 of the garrison to the sword, and in a few days was in possession of the country.

But it is well worth remarking, that perhaps no expedition ever more distinctly failed in all its principal objects. Its seizure of Malta gave that great fortress finally into the hands of the English, by whom it had been immediately besieged, and taken with its garrison. But the first retributive blow was the destruction of the whole French fleet at Aboukir. The next was the defeat of Bonaparte himself, by Sir Sidney Smith and the Turks, at Acre. This was followed by the successive defeats of the French by the British army, until not a man of that expedition remained in Egypt but as a prisoner.

Yet the punishment did not end there. France was to be scourged, and the lash fell upon her with matchless severity. The allies, encouraged by the absence of the last general and best army of France, poured fresh troops into Italy. The Russian government, relieved from all fears on the side of Turkey, by the irritation of the French attack on a Turkish province, sent the celebrated Suvarrow with a strong force to Italy. He swept the French before him, and recovered the entire country in a single rapid but most bloody campaign. It was computed that, in killed and prisoners, France lost one hundred thousand men in Italy before the end of the year. Thus the fruits of the single atrocity of invading Egypt, and of slaughtering unfortunate Turks and Arabs without a cause, was the loss of two great armies—of Italy—of the most important station of the Mediterranean for ever, and of all hopes of possessing Egypt, which they not improbably might have obtained by purchase from the necessities of Turkey. Even the more minute objects were failures. The directory wholly failed in keeping Napoleon at a distance, for he contrived to return, however disreputably. And even in his personal instance, nothing but the accidental circumstances of the country could have saved him from ruin. His defeats in Syria had thrown a cloud on his military reputation, which would have enabled the directory to bring him to a court-martial for desertion. But he was saved for a heavier fall. The loss of the Italian campaign, under Joubert and Macdonald, alone protected him at the moment.

He was received by the people, in their emergency, as the sole hope of the country. The battle of Marengo turned the tide again, and that larger course of indiction began, which he was evidently reserved to put in motion against Europe. Yet what were even his greatest victories but so many new shapes of suffering, in which France herself shared with unbroken powers of the continent, in which hundreds of thousands of her people were sacrificed, only to bring an enemy twice to Paris, to lay the country at the feet of Europe; and even in the instance of that wonder of genius and fortune himself, only to make him the most memorable victim of humiliation at the world has ever seen—the blasted figure of a colossal ambition.

The battle of Aboukir was one of the most singular and one of the most momentous, in naval annals. Nelson, after having twice traversed the Mediterranean in chase of the French, first saw them on the 1st of August, (1798.) drawn up in line, at the anchorage of Aboukir, with their broadsides to the sea, and protected by guns on the shore. He advanced straight to the mark the moment he saw them, at three in the afternoon. The number of ships on both sides was equal—each thirteen

[\* Hear! Hear! *Museum.*]



sail of the line: but the French had a great advantage in guns and men, their ships carrying 1196 guns, and 11,230 men; while the British had but 1012 guns, and 8068 men. The enemy had a still more important advantage in the size of their ships, having the *L'Orient* of 120 guns, and the *Franklin* and *Guillaume Tell* of 80; while the British were all seventy-fours. But they had what was more than equivalent to all other superiority—Nelson in command. Nelson, by throwing a part of his force between the enemy and the shore, accomplished the great manœuvre of bringing an overwhelming weight of fire on a part of the opposing line. Five ships had passed inside the French line, while six ranged outside. After doing this sustaining this storm of fire for six hours, the enemy's ships began to strike; and flames were soon after seen from the admiral's ship, the *L'Orient*. The blaze rapidly covered this magnificent vessel, and threw a light on the contending fleets, the surrounding sea, and the shore, on which French troops and Arabs had gathered to see the battle. At length she blew up, with an explosion so tremendous as to shake every ship, and cover them with blazing fragments. Nelson, though wounded severely in the head, and carried below decks, on hearing that the *L'Orient* was on fire, got up alone, and made his way to the quarter-deck, when, with that humanity which formed so conspicuous a part of his gallant nature, he ordered his boats out to save the enemy's officers and seamen who were jumping overboard.

By daylight the victory was seen to be complete. Of the thirteen French sail of the line, two were burned and nine taken; of their four frigates, one was burned and one sunk—two sail of the line and two frigates alone escaping, from the inability of the crippled English ships to follow them. The British loss was 895 killed and wounded. The enemy's loss was dreadful; 5225 killed; 3105 wounded and prisoners, subsequently sent on shore, on their parole, not to serve until exchanged. But Napoleon, who despised such punctilios, instantly incorporated into his army all who were able to march, and made a regiment out of those remnants of the battle.

The mighty warrior who gained this victory became instantly and justly the object of European admiration. He was loaded with honours by the allied courts; England gave him a pension of £2000 a-year, with that title which he had so nobly contemplated on his first sight of the enemy: "Before this time to-morrow I shall have gained a peerage, or Westminster Abbey."

Pitt's reply to the charge, that England had been too frugal of her honours on this great occasion, was worthy of a Greek orator.

"Admiral Nelson's fame will be coeval with the British name. And it will be remembered that he gained the greatest naval victory on record; when no man will think of asking whether he had been created a baron, a viscount, or an earl."

The fate of the *L'Orient* seemed to be characteristic of that retribution which so sternly visited the enterprise. On board of that vessel Napoleon had amassed the plunder from the churches of Malta: she was loaded with plate and sacred ornaments, infamously torn from the altars of the island. And though the worship was that of a corrupt belief, yet we must remember that those treasures were devoted to religion, however imperfectly known; and that they were carried away in the open scorn of homage to God and justice to man. It is supposed that the whole of this sacrilegious pillage went

to the bottom with this doomed vessel. In the flames that consumed the *L'Orient*, as in the hand-writing on the banquet-wall of the Babylonian king, was marked the final destiny of the profaner.

### THE BATTLE.

What see I on this barren strand?—  
A burning sky, a burning sand,  
A shipless sea, a lifeless land!

Yet Time! thou old destroyer, Time,  
Thou'st seen it earth's most glorious clime,  
All throne and temple—all sublime.

Of earth's wild drama wildest stage;  
Of mind's first flight, war's darkest rage,  
The Soldier, and the Archimage!

Then sank its sun in midnight gloom;—  
Its life was treasured in the tomb.  
Egypt was all—the Catacomb!

Yet on that strand was Europe freed!  
The world beheld that battle bled  
And mighty England did the deed.

'Twas eve; and on the horizon pale,  
Like cloud on cloud, uprose the sail;  
And warrior-echoes fill'd the gale.

There, squadron'd on the sunset tide,  
With day's last gold and amber dyed,  
Came Britain's sea-kings in their pride.

Splendid the thronging pomp swept on,  
To cannon-fire and trumpet tone;  
Each war-ship like a floating throne.

Who led them on? A deathless name,  
That through their bosoms shot like flame—  
Nelson! the noblest son of fame!

Startled, yet stern, the Frenchman's line  
Saw in the sun the red-cross shine,  
And felt it Ruin's judgment-sign.

Then blazed the gun—then burst the shell,  
Then thick the muskets' fire-shower fell,  
And all was thunder, shout, and yell!

'Tis light—the peal comes long and loud,  
Each thunderer roaring from his cloud—  
Each wrapp'd in his own sulphurous shroud.

'Tis midnight; but athwart the haze,  
What startling splendour blasts the gaze?  
Huge *L'Orient*! thine that fatal blaze.

Round mast and flag the flame-wreaths soar;  
Red rolls the surge, like molten ore;  
Starts into spectral light the shore.

The anchors part. No more she clings  
To shore or sand. Afar she springs,  
The whirlwind and the flame her wings.

The fight is hush'd at once! no sound  
Bursts from the brazen ramparts round:  
The Briton's heart his hand has bound.

But, where the desert meets the glare,  
Ring on the melancholy air  
Howls of a mighty host's despair.

There, by the corpse-strewn waters stood,  
In the mind's more than solitude,  
The man of glory and of blood!

NAPOLEON: NO! great homicide!  
A wilder sand, a wilder tide,  
Must give the moral of thy pride.

The magazine's fired!—One horrid roar  
Bursts round the sky, the sea, the shore.  
L'Orient—thy last, fierce fight is o'er.

Down darts she, through the whirlpool, down;  
To leave the shoals of Egypt strown  
With wealth of many a shrine and throne.

Morn rose in beauty. Broadly roll'd  
The red-cross flag its victor fold.  
Fallen tricolor, thy tale was told!

All calm, that lovely light beneath,  
The sabre slumber'd in its sheath.  
The cannon held its fiery breath.

Though Britain's blood was pour'd like rain,  
Not one bright drop was shed in vain—  
The combat shiver'd Europe's chain!

Where is that combat's victor? Gone.  
His fame was like a star, alone!  
He *will'd* to conquer—and 'twas done.

One bolder deed was yet untried—  
A vassal world his flag defied:  
He smote it at a blow—and died!

\* *End.*

From Blackwood's Magazine

## HYMNS OF A HERMIT.

### HYMN XVI.

The shapes of earth are passing still away,  
The seas with sullen rage their bounds devour,  
The rivers waste their banks from day to day,  
Rocks cannot last, nor stars outlive their hour.

The gnarled trees, of deep undated root,  
While ages o'er them pass, like herbage fall;  
And peaks that bear to-day the wild-goat's foot,  
To-morrow vanish 'mid the torrent's brawl.

Not long the building tells its foun-der's name,  
And loud-sung trophies fade in silent rust;  
The desert sand-heapwhelms the city's fame,  
The book is journeying tow'rd its writer's dust.

Each generation yields in turn to death  
Its living forms and looks, beloved and bold;  
And lost in pale destruction's frozen breath,  
Our vital air is changed to pulseless cold.

Decay and desolation's thunderous cloud  
O'er all things hangs, and dims the summer sky;  
And all that seems imperishably proud,  
Still, downward sinking slow, consents to die.

While all so totters, wheels, and floats from view,  
Whate'er the eye can mark, the hand contrive;  
Thy word, O God! alone on earth is true,  
And dares 'mid boundless ruin still survive.

The utterance keen of thine eternal will  
Went forth at first through nothingness and gloom;  
Through depths of ages working onward still,  
It crowns with life each world's successive tomb.

From thee it flows creating time and space;  
With suns and planets fills the dark abyss;  
And spreads the light that veils thy changeless face,  
Refracted wide through Nature's varying prism.

That living Word sustains the sand, the flower,  
The insect swarm, the brood of giant things;  
Combines the whole by one harmonious power,  
And loud in conscious hearts thy glory sings.

Yet weighs on all the eclipse and curse of ill,  
Of failing good, and hopes that tulle no more;  
And every leaf that sails the autumnal rill  
Its dying sister leaves with sighs deplore.

The mountains darken o'er the shatter'd plain,  
When earthquake smites the town that sways a realm;  
The stars new-born lament the stars that wane,  
And seas wail hoarse above the fleet they whelm.

And man, whose hopes his bound the most exceed,  
The loftiest mourner 'mid the griefs of all,  
Must shade his front with sad sepulchral weed,  
And wear, for kingly robes, the funeral pall.

Amid such endless change and storms of night,  
Still moves the Word divine, eduring day,  
But thwarted, clogg'd, repell'd, by flashes bright,  
And winning hardest conquests o'er decay.

But still in One whose soul, aloof from wrong,  
Was fill'd with earnest unpolled good,  
Resounds thy voice an undiscordant song,  
And tells thy will as at the first it stood.

Thy Word fulfill'd was He, for ever shown  
To man the living Archetype of Life,  
In whose embodied light our spirits own  
A certain hope—a rest secure from strife.

And ne'er from mortal thought shall pass away  
The form of truth and peace he gave to earth;  
In whom our hearts with love thy rule obey,  
And gain from them a second, happier birth.

Without that light, though fair the frame of things,  
How dark the shades of grief it all would wear!  
From it through death immortal being springs,  
And all thy presence dawns upon despair.

From Chambers' Edinburgh Journal.

### MORAL EPIDEMICS.

There is a remarkable analogy between diseases of the body and diseases of the mind, and it is shown in nothing more strikingly than in the tendency of some morbid mental conditions to spread, like common bodily ailments, and take possession of great bodies of people. Some of the most puzzling things in the history of superstition may be explained upon this principle.

For example—witchcraft. It has always appeared to enlightened inquirers as a very strange peculiarity attending this superstition, that so many of the individuals accused of it were themselves, as appears from their confessions and otherwise, under the impression that they were witches. We could not of course expect that any individual accused of this imaginary crime would have rested a defence upon an allegation of its imaginary character, for the belief in it was then universal. But we might have expected that most of the accused would represent themselves as innocent in thought, word, and deed. The contrary of this is the case. Vast numbers readily confessed to those very impossible things in which the superstition consisted—to intercourse, for instance, with supernatural beings, including the prince of evil spirits, to midnight journeyings through the air, and to successful practisings against the health and prosperity of their neighbours. How should this be?

An extensive observation of witch cases supplies a key to the mystery. It is found that there is a remarkable sameness in them all, even those of different countries presenting in general the same leading features. Almost always we find that the culprit has received visits from Satan in a human form, and sold to him her soul and hopes of salvation. The acts of reverence paid to him, and the marks which he makes upon their bodies to distinguish them as his flock, are always the same. The description of a witch meeting in the county of Nairn, in the north of Scotland, A. D. 1663, is identical with the accounts given by Glanvil of meetings of Swedish witches in the Blocca; and always a broomstick or the stalk of any common shrub is sufficient equipage for the old ladies, if they only, on mounting, pronounce a certain sentence in the name of their grisly master. The things which witches can do are always the same, and have been so in all ages. Their power of raising storms is alluded to by the Roman poet Tibullus. Their power of destroying any one by making a waxen image of him, and melting it away before a slow fire, is adverted to by Ovid as well as Shakespeare. The very things which they use for their incantations—loads, newts, fragments of human bodies, and the ashes of the dead—have undergone no change in the course of time; and their taking the form of hares and cats, their enchantments to produce sickness, and their malicious efforts to stop mills, and drain their neighbours' cattle of milk, are all stated as ordinary parts of witch procedure, repeated over and over again, without variation, in every part of Christendom. It is, in short, quite evident that the confessions of these unfortunate persons took their form from what may be called the code of popular doctrines on the subject of witchcraft. And the history of this code is a very instructive one. It first took a decided shape in a bull of Pope Innocent VIII. in 1484, by which witchcraft was amply described, and powers were granted for its punishment. From this time, much was written on

the subject; prosecutions were frequent; public attention was strongly attracted: and, exactly in proportion as more and more witches were burnt, so did more and more witches come into being. Before the issue of the bull, the offence was obscure and rare; but, in thirty years after, it was so common, that Geneva saw five hundred burnt in three months; Lorraine nine hundred in a few years; and in France the number burnt was described as "almost infinite." The delusion lasted in Germany, and most other countries of Europe, till the latter part of the seventeenth century, not always manifesting the same intensity, but occasionally flaming up into a greater blaze than usual. Its whole features were those of a contagious disease, which sometimes slumbers a little, and sometimes seems to revive with fresh strength. But whenever a re-awakening took place, the delusion always went on for a while, increasing and spreading, and this sheerly in consequence of the strong bent of the public mind to the subject, until it seemed, as it were, to burn itself out, or something else occurred to divert attention. There can be no doubt that the whole evil arose from that unhappy bull, followed up as it was by books commenting on and explaining it. The doctrines were by these means extensively made known and deeply impressed. Working on minds unenlightened, unreasonably bigoted, and barbarous, they led to prosecutions and executions, by which the excitement was further increased. Then all the persons of a certain order, namely, those of weakest and most excitable minds, brooding over what all were talking of, would work themselves up into a belief that they were guilty of the crime; and the doctrines of demonology, which had been made familiar to them, would take form in their minds as recollections of actual transactions in which they had been engaged. Hence their confessing to an impossible offence, and hence the uniformity or general resemblance of all the confessions.

We have another remarkable example of such a moral epidemic in the history of the Anointers of Milan, which has lately been placed before the British public in a translation from an Italian work. The notion that the plague could be propagated by a deleterious ointment, applied to the person, or even upon the walls of a house, was, it seems, one of old date. In 1630, four Frenchmen fled from Madrid, under suspicion of having attempted to propagate the disease by such means in that city. The king sent circulars describing the supposed culprits to various states, and amongst the rest to Milan, where the plague was raging at the time. The intelligence produced a strong impression in the infected city, and ere long, it was discovered that several houses had been secretly anointed during the night. People flocked to look at the houses, and to speculate on the nature of the offence and its probable authors. The excitement was much increased by a proclamation stating the fact, and offering a reward for the discovery of the delinquents. Great anxiety was felt to detect the anointers, and very soon a few persons were taken up on suspicion, and tortured to make them confess. Though scarcely any evidence could be brought against them, they were condemned and executed, generally in the most barbarous modes that could be devised; and thus the excitement was still further increased. The house of the supposed compounder of the ointment was pulled down, and a tall pillar erected on the spot, to commemorate his guilt. Meanwhile, more houses were discovered to be anointed, or supposed to be anointed, and the public appetite for victims was increased. At one time fifteen hundred

persons were in prison on suspicion. Scores were broken on the wheel, or had their flesh torn with red-hot pincers from their bodies; and many only anticipated that fate by dying in prison of the pestilence. It is remarkable, that, as the punishments increased, the number of houses anointed, or supposed to be anointed, increased also, till at length it became a wonder how so much ointment was made. It may now be fairly doubted if any house really was anointed, although the historians of the time inform us, without the least appearance of doubt in their own minds, that hundreds and thousands were smeared over every night. But whether anointing really took place, or was only a delusion of the senses, there can be no doubt of one important fact, that many persons at length spontaneously confessed that they had been guilty of anointing with a view to spread the pestilence. The probability is that, as in the case of witchcraft, the persons of more weak and excitable mind, after long and intense pondering on the supposed act, at length came to believe that they had been guilty of it; but it is not impossible that, under a delirious excitement, some had actually done or attempted to do that which so many were supposed to be doing. However the truth may be in this respect, we have an equally instructive illustration of what we have ventured to call moral epidemic.

History is full of similar illusions spread under the influence of great excitement. Some are of a nature requiring to be spoken of with tenderness, and which we shall therefore leave uncommenced on; but in all, the rule is universal, that certain shapes of ideas are worked out into realities, and even rapture is felt in the strictest conformity to a model. The craziest minds are first affected, and then the next craziest, and so on. What one says he has felt, another soon thinks he feels; and thus the epidemic goes on, till the materials of excitement are exhausted, it comes to a natural death.

The same law holds with regard to crime. In the autumn of 1830, some corn-stacks, barns, and other farm buildings in the county of Kent, were burnt by night, and several farmers received letters, threatening their property with the same treatment, unless the wages of farm labour were raised, and the use of machinery discontinued. In the course of the three last months of the year, these nocturnal acts of incendiarism were extended into Hampshire, Wiltshire, Buckingham, Sussex, and Surrey, and some took place so far north as Berwickshire. There is considerable reason to believe that they were, to a great extent, not, as ordinary crimes are, the result of wicked dispositions, but merely imitative acts. The newspapers had spoken of the first burnings with great alarm. Much political importance was attached to them. The popular fancy was caught by the odd term "Swing," which, from being the signature of threatening letters, came in a little time to distinguish the whole transactions. Thus much excitement was at length felt. There can be little doubt that, almost from the first, some of the burnings arose from the excitement alone; but, latterly, the most of them, if not all, had probably no other origin. One of the criminals afterwards confessed that he had set fire to his master's ricks from no motive whatever; only he had been incessantly thinking of the burnings, and even had dreamt of them, and at length he had risen from his sleep, and gone out and done the deed. We may fairly presume that much of the guilt of this dreadful time would not have been incurred, if the first outrages had not obtained so much notoriety. In an early age, when there were no newspapers, it is probable that, with the same popular discontent, there

would not have been a twentieth part of the outrages committed.

The effect which the performance of Schiller's play of the Robbers had upon the university youth of Germany, in making them go out upon the highway, is well known, and may be referred to the same principle of an epidemic through the operation of the imitative faculty. The act is known to be criminal, but the fascination of example is, in such circumstances, not to be resisted. It is from the same morbid desire to imitate, that suicides sometimes take place. A young lady, throwing herself from the Monument, occasions much paraphrasing; and, ere many days elapse, a boy goes up and also throws himself over. We have been assured that the peculiar mode of suicide adopted by a great political personage a few years ago, was exactly followed not long after by a private person. Hence also the runs that are made upon particular crimes.—Poisoning became a fashion at the French court in the reign of Louis XIV.; and some years ago, three men were in prison in Edinburgh all at once, for the crime of murdering their wives; and two of them were executed together.

These are not, to the best of our judgment, unprofitable speculations on mind. It appears to us that some very important considerations may be deduced from them.

Seeing that the public mind, in its present imperfectly enlightened state, is liable to be seized with such accessions of extravagance, it is clear that the rational are under a strong call to be on their guard, and to guard as many others as possible, against all immoderate notions and dogmas that may be attempted to be impressed upon them. With many who do not want sense, the knowledge that such and such a doctrine is in great vogue, and is the subject of much discussion, is sufficient to mislead. They mistake notoriety for soundness, and join the trains of crazy enthusiasts under the impression that they are men of great authority. Thus it may happen, and does often happen, that the more extravagant an object is, it has the better chance of succeeding, its very extravagance causing a sensation and a fame which carries the multitude in its favour. If the present paper do nothing more than establish with our readers that a thing may be the theme of universal talk, and have thousands of famed apostles and martyrs, and yet be a gross delusion at bottom, it will have done good service.

Seeing that there is such a tendency to imitate and take up with whatever is very broadly brought under public notice, it becomes of serious importance to consider whether our criminal procedure is most calculated to do good or evil. A man, we shall say, commits a murder of a very shocking kind. This is an act of great wickedness, and it seems quite just that he should be put to death for it. It is also but right that the procedure against him, to the very last, should be public, for otherwise the innocent might occasionally suffer. But if it be found that the publication of the details of the murder tend, if not to lead others to commit the same offence, at least to brutalise the public mind, we may fairly doubt if more harm than good is not done by a public prosecution. If it further be found that the execution of the offender only brings the worthless together for an hour of debasing excitement, and for the purpose of committing, as far as possible, other crimes, we may reasonably fear if the vengeance of the law be a thing conducive to edification. If the following be at all a true picture, we suspect these doubts and fears must be considered as certainties:—"During the period of Greenacre's imprisonment,"



sonment on a charge of murder, the gin-shops in all quarters of the town were every morning early crowded, and remained so till night, with drunken parties, hearing and discussing the disgusting particulars of that horrible affair. Mothers neglected their children, wives their husbands, to drink gin; and in the excitement brought on by the morbid feeling of curiosity, listening and waiting, from hour to hour, to pick up minute accounts of the manner in which the murder, mutilation, &c. were effected; at every breath uttering horrible imprecations. Those of the poorer class who were not at the gin-shops, were collected in knots, reiterating what they had heard to their neighbours and children. The night before the malefactor's execution, the adjacent streets were filled with women, girls, and boys, who spent the night in riot and debauchery, up to the hour of the wretched culprit's appearance on the scaffold. The noise the rabble made during the night reached the cell, within the interior of the prison, and, it is said, awaked the doomed man out of a profound sleep. Pockets were picked under the gallows, and the remainder of the day was spent in riot and drunkenness. For weeks subsequently, boys and girls were seen enacting, under gateways situated in low neighbourhoods, the scene of the murder and mutilation in mimicry. It is hard to say how such evils are to be avoided; but assuredly a mode of criminal treatment in which the details of the crime would be kept more private, and the criminal punished otherwise than by a public execution, is much to be desired.

Upon the same principles, a popular literature, or theatrical representations, in which the acts and characters of criminals are brought prominently forward, must have a debasing and most pernicious effect. Here the excitement is not so broadly seen—though it is scarcely possible for the life of Jack Sheppard to be read all at once by thousands, and acted night after night at once in five London theatres, without causing the idea of burglary to be dwelt upon for the time with some degree of fervour. But if less potent in degree, such reading and such sights must still act in the same manner and to the same effects. The worst of actions are perhaps presented under redeeming and alluring lights; the magic of imaginative talent is thrown over them; the victims of vice appear at least in the enjoyment of notoriety. Then they act also through the principle of imitation. They present specimens of human conduct; the conduct is bad, and, in as far as they are imitated, wickedness must be the consequence. If we only consider how the well-disposed mind is affected by the biography of a good man, how anxious we feel to imitate so bright an example, how even his affections serve to us as models for our own, we cannot for a moment doubt that every delineation of vice, with however plausible excuses and professions it may be brought forward, must have an injurious effect. We would say, then, let every effort be made to put down literature of this kind. But, before the words are out of our mouth, we are forced to recollect our own doctrine: persecution attracts notice and excites interest, and there is not any thing in the world so vicious, but to direct much open indignation against it only serves to give it greater way and head. The efforts, then, which the virtuous are to make against demoralising literature and demoralising theatrical representations, must be governed by prudence. They must chiefly work in secret, and by counteraction, making, if possible, the good more attractive than the bad, and educating those into paths of honesty and sobriety who would otherwise be misled into the walks of error.

From Tait's Magazine.

## PARVENUS.

It may be observed that whenever people wish to say an eminently uncivil thing in the civilised manner, they have recourse to that oleaginuous language which smooths down so many difficulties—the language of lovers and diplomatists—the language of universal humbug. Of late years, accordingly, the designation *Upstart*, has been pretty generally paraphrased by the coteries into "*Parvenu*;" inasmuch as, in these days of progression, the class in question is getting up a majority, and begins to command the bows and congees of mankind. Almost every great measure of recent accomplishment has been effected by the upstarts; and we cannot, for the life of us, conceive why some courteous non-substantive of English derivation, cannot be found or imagined to specify a class so valuable to the interests of society. Strictly speaking, the word *parvenu* implies only a person who, from a low state, has attained distinctions of wealth and station. Intrinsically, it has no ignominious meaning; but the usage of society has endowed it, like that of *upstart*, with a tincture of baseness.

In point of fact, a sovereign on his throne may be a *parvenu*. Leopold and Otho are *parvenu* kings, as much as \* \* \* \* the member is a *parvenu* esquire. Napoleon was a *parvenu*—Canning a *parvenu*; several of our highest legal functionaries, of our most eminent statesmen, can be no otherwise interpreted. Yet, the same scornful thrones and dominions of the fashionable world, who cast the name of *parvenu* in the teeth of men whose department of distinction does not happen to lie betwixt the wind and their nobility, would never dream of thus opprobriating the great names stamped current by the universal voice, as belonging to the aristocracy of immortal fame. Even yesterday, even to-day, we have popes, cardinals, archbishops, chancellors, cabinet ministers, academicians, senators, painters, poets, sculptors, constituting the highest illustration of this and other realms, who rose from the lowest order of society to do honour to the highest; honour equal in degree to the very odour of gentility, emanating from the order ennobled by centuries of do-nothingness. Why, therefore, apply the term *parvenu*, by which such persons are commonly designated, in the same vilifying sense in which it specifies the opulent tallow-chandler who, having achieved his hundreds of thousands, retires to his villa at Hornsey, to mount sham canon on a miniature rampart before his door? his only notion of the value of wealth being the power it confers of eating a better dinner, drinking stronger liquor, and sleeping fourteen hours of the four-and-twenty, instead of half-a-dozen?

To people of this egotistical disposition alone, would we apply the word *parvenu*; if, indeed, it is to be included in future codifications of the land's language. We would have a *parvenu* understood to mean any person who, having attained rank or riches, renders them sub-servient only to his personal gratification. One of the most opulent individuals in Europe is the Marquis de Las Marismas, whom the euphony of his newly acquired title does not prevent the Parisian sauce-boxes from pointing out as *Agnado*, the *parvenu*. In the French metropolis, he lodges in a magnificent hotel; his country-seat is a splendid *château*, formerly the residence of the mother of the present king of the French;

and the Parisians who remember him a few years ago carrying about samples of Havana cigars and Malaga wine, can never resist their inclination to beard him with the name of *parvenu*!

Never was designation less appropriately applied. Agnado is a man of birth and education, who having, like Rothschild, attained enormous wealth by the ability of his financial combinations, applies his princely fortune to the most princely purposes—to the protection of the arts, the encouragement of science, and the amelioration of the condition of the poor. The new marquis' noble gallery of pictures is open to the public with as much liberality as that of the Louvre; and, in the vicinity of his country seat, he has created roads and bridges, of which the former royal proprietors never dreamed; nay, better still, he has endowed school-houses, and instituted prizes for rural merit, which will cause his name to be remembered with blessings in the land, when those of his aristocratic neighbours, *de pure sang*, have mouldered in the dust. This man should no more be called a *parvenu* than Cardinal Wolsey.

In such a country as ours, on the other hand, (a country regarded, by certain continental kingdoms, as in itself a *parvenu*—as having been habited in skins of beasts, or wearing its own tattooed, when they were clothed in purple and fine linen; or having dieted on hips, haws, and acorns, when they were inventing *soufflés*, and spicing their broths,) nothing can be more absurd than the affectation of false pride with which we disgrace our honest nature. A few months ago precisely, when our popular prints were recording, extracted from the journals of a recent traveller, the vulgarisms of Brother Jonathan, as those of a mere *parvenu*, an untutored rustic not yet instructed how to behave himself, a leading French journal put forth a letter from its London correspondent, containing a criticism on the Italian Opera of London, couched as follows:—"The company which last winter enchanted the refined taste of the elegant audiences of Paris, is at this moment performing in what is called the Queen's Theatre. Our orchestras, milliners, coiffeurs, all the adjuncts of fashionable life, are, in fact, now in London. As the master sends out after dinner to his valet the fragments of his meal, we despatch the scraps of our gay season to the English capital!" Gracious Powers! the *beau monde* of London—the world which calls itself exclusively "the fine"—the modern "three thousand"—the circle of circles—the coterie of coteries—the world that "gilds its gold, paints its lilies, and throws fresh perfume on the violet"—the world that finds not the common earth good enough to tread on, branded by a French *feuilletoniste* as a *parvenu*!

But it is not because open to the insults of courtiers, earlier enlisted than herself in the great feudal conspiracy of Europe against the liberties of mankind, that England ought to blush for the vulgarity of her false pride. Her own perceptions ought to have instructed her, that the greatness of her power consists in the very class which she presumes to vilify by the malice of a name. While she lies slumbering in the lap of the Delilah, Fashion, whose sharp-witted implements are rending away the accessories which constitute her strength, the wise portion of mankind look on and smile at her fatal delusion. Some day or other, perhaps, after suffering persecution and learning mercy, she will begin to understand that, instead of stigmatizing as *parvenus* persons who live in the exercise of faculties and virtues becoming the man of birth and education, it behooves

her to salute them in the words of Cymbeline, as "The liver, heart, and brain of Britain!"

The only species of upstarts whom she will then dishonour with an epithet of scorn, will be those who have achieved distinction by intrigue or infamy; whether arrayed in mitres or full-bottomed wigs; whether bearing gold sticks or silver, white wands or black rods; whether adorned with ribands, blue, red, or green; or displaying stars as multiplied as those of the milky way.

We have admired at drawing-rooms or levees more than one consequential gentleman in scarlet, padded like a generalissimo, and criss-crossed from stock to waist-belt with orders of every shape, till their expanded chests resembled the nursery game of fox and goose; men who, to the knowledge of the whole army, never smelt powder in the prosperous course of their military lives, saving on the 1st of September, or at a review on Wormwood-Scrubs—these orders and badges, chiefly foreign, being the reward of sneakery of the most contemptible description. Such fellows as these, in spite of their having basked in all the royal smiles of Europe for the last thirty years, we call decided *parvenus*.

We have seen another individual ascend—thanks to a petty accident of inheritance—without education, without merit, from abject poverty to Cæsar-like affluence; the first act of whose prosperity was to spit upon the people from whose ranks he had been promoted. After buying a seat in parliament, with the express view to make manifest the virulence of his toryism, this especial upstart purchased a nobleman's daughter to become his wife; and it was some satisfaction to the world that, while he obeyed the promptings of his nature by assisting to trample on the poor, his noble consort avenged their cause by publicly trampling on himself. This man, again, we call a decided *parvenu*.

We have seen a woman elevated by a pretty face, adroit, cunning, and matchless audacity, from the streets of an Irish country-town, to the ranks of the peerage, who disowns her relations, withholds her charity from an indigent father, her countenance from an obscure sister, and vents upon those, over whose heads she presumes herself to have arisen (her superiors in sense, conduct, and refinement of mind) all the vulgar sarcasms of her hedge and ditch education. This woman, again, we call a decided *parvenu*.

Your *parvenu* peeress, by the way, is one of the most flagrant of the class of upstarts. We could pick out one of these dainty dames from the most motley throng, whether in ball-room, bargain-shop, or any other public place where the *little great* of the female world of London most do congregate. They are to be known by their ostentatious affability of manner, by their elaborate fashionability of dress; their locks always betray the hand of the coiffeur; the atmosphere around them is scented with essences; they seem to be written in italics on the muster-roll of society; for it is impossible not to notice those who bestow so much notice on themselves. A noble woman in mind, as well as birth, is too much accustomed to the precedence so cared for by the *parvenu*, to give it a thought. Her robes of estate hang loosely upon her, like the chaste drapery of an antique statue, not like the frippery of a French milliner; she condescends to no one and assumes over no one; she has no fear of being thought proud. What has she to be prouder of than other people? Custom induces her to fancy that the world is made of lords and ladies, like those among whom her childhood imbibed its earliest impressions.

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